

Simp
H O M Œ O P A T H Y.

S P E E C H

AT

THE EDINBURGH MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY;

WITH

NOTES ON THE PECULIAR THEOLOGICAL OPINIONS OF SOME OF
HAHNEMANN'S DISCIPLES;

AND

REMARKS ON THE ALLEGED LAW, "SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURANTUR;"

ETC. ETC.

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"When we come to be instructed by philosophers, we must bring the light of *common sense* along with us, and by it judge of the new light."—DR THOMAS REID.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

DURING the course of the present year various concurrent circumstances, which it is unnecessary to detail here, have tended to direct the particular attention of the Medical Corporations and Societies of Great Britain to the anomalous position and status of practitioners of Homœopathy. In consequence, the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons, of Edinburgh, the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the Provincial Medical Association of England, and the Medical Society of London, have all severally passed resolutions prohibitory of their Fellows and Members meeting professionally with those who affect to cure the diseases of their patients with infinitesimal doses. At their first meeting for the winter Session, on the 19th November last, the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh unanimously passed a resolution of a similar character. Professor Syme moved the resolution, and argued the propriety of its adoption, in a speech of considerable length. In seconding Mr Syme's motion, I took occasion to allude to one or two points—and these, perhaps, after all, not the most frail and foolish points—in the so-called system of Homœopathy. An account of the proceedings of this meeting of the Society was published in the last Number of the "Monthly Journal of Medical Science;" and in this account Mr Syme's observations and my own are reported. The portion of this report referring to my observations to the Society is reprinted in the following pages; partly in consequence of the publication of a Letter by Dr Henderson, relative to the discussion;

and partly from Dr Rutherford Russell having addressed to me, in regard to it, a communication, the reply to which will be found in the sequel. I have prefixed to the observations in the speech a few explanatory preliminary remarks ; and I have added to the report two or three foot notes. One of these unexpectedly extended to such a length, that it has been printed by itself under the heading of "Modern Hahnemannic Theology." Lastly, I have appended some observations on the alleged universal homœopathic law, "*Similia similibus curantur.*"

In the present edition of this pamphlet, I at one time intended to leave out the Letter to Dr Russell and the two first pages of the Speech, as they referred to personal matters, more than to homœopathy. They have been retained, however ; and merely because the reason of their omission might possibly have been misinterpreted.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

IN reference to the resolutions of the Colleges and medical bodies alluded to in the preceding Introductory Note, it is perhaps right that the public should distinctly understand that the practitioners of Homœopathy, particularly those in Great Britain, have generally affected and asserted that the doctrines of Hahnemann regarding infinitesimal doses, &c., formed merely additions to and improvements upon that system of medicine, "which had hitherto occupied the minds of men, and been tested and confirmed by the experience of ages," and were not fundamentally and exactly opposed to it in its principles and practice. Homœopathists fortified the belief of the public in this misconception by pointing to the fact, that they possessed the same medical licenses and degrees, and belonged to the same medical colleges, societies, &c., as the practitioners of legitimate medicine. Long, and as I conceive properly, the common law of England and Scotland has been such as to allow to British subjects the most perfect freedom as to patronising or practising any form whatever of medical superstition and pretension; and the late resolutions of our medical corporations and societies were not, therefore, intended to interfere in any degree with homœopathists continuing to treat all those who applied to them, according to their own peculiar creed. But the resolutions were intended to show that the differences between the doctrines and practices of legitimate physicians, and the doctrines and practices of homœopathists, were so great as to render any further intercourse and co-operation between them impossible in the conduct of *professional* matters, and in the duties of *professional* life. Hahnemann himself had long before pronounced precisely a similar opinion regarding the proper relations of legitimate practitioners to homœopathists, and the impossibility of the disciples of homœopathy countenancing the doctrines and practices of legitimate physicians, or, as he chose to term them—"allopaths."

In the Preface to the last Edition of his *Organon*, published in 1833, Hahnemann asserts and avows that the old system of medicine, which had been followed by physicians for some 2500 years at least before his birth, and his own "newly discovered true healing art," were systems the "exact opposite" of each other; as "opposite" (says he) "as day is to night;" that the "unhallowed main business of the old school of medicine" was "to render through ignorance, if not *fatal*, at all events incurable, the vast majority (99 in every 100) of *all* diseases;" that it "had shortened the lives of ten times as many human beings as the most destructive wars, and rendered many millions of patients more diseased and wretched than they were originally;" and then, amidst other matters, he charitably maintains that the "pernicious practice" of the "old school" could only be followed by men who are "insensible to the stings of conscience," &c. If it were necessary, it would be easy, I believe, to add abundance of other quotations of the same kind, and breathing the same bitter spirit, from other homœopathic writings.

I have cited these expressions and opinions of Hahnemann, indited as they were by him in the "calmness and coolness of old age,"—for he last published them when 78 years old,—in order to show two things:—*First*, That in the controversy regarding homœopathy all the detraction and abuse has not been confined, as some anxiously pretend, to one side; and *Secondly*, That Hahnemann, the founder of homœopathy, and the great oracle and authority of his sect, himself declared some twenty years ago, what the British medical corporations and societies have declared now, (and what *they* have been held up as "unjust" and "persecuting" for declaring), namely, that the practitioners of homœopathy cannot professionally co-operate or associate with the legitimate physicians of the "old school," for homœopathy, as Hahnemann solemnly avowed and pronounced, "if rightly apprehended, will be found to be so EXCLUSIVE, and in that way only serviceable, that as the doctrine is pure, so must the practice be also; and all backward straying to the pernicious routine of the old school, (whose opposite it is, as day is to night), is *totally impossible*."—(Preface to the Fifth Edition of the *Organon*, p. 12.) Now, certainly the late resolutions of our medical colleges and societies do nothing more than carry this opinion and dictum of Hahnemann regarding his own followers into virtual effect; and surely it is inconsistent on the part of these followers and others, to hold up such a tardy step as an instance of "persecution." At the

same time, in adopting this step, the colleges and societies have so far discharged their duty to the profession and the public, by at last testifying before them, in what light the leading medical bodies view the creed and principles of the homœopathists. To ask men holding that creed, and practising upon these principles, to dissociate themselves from our medical colleges and societies, is certainly no more an act of injustice than it would be for a Christian Church to remove from its communion, those who held the creed and practised the principles of Mohammedism, or Buddhism, or of any other extreme and exclusive religious heresy. With the opinions which the medical societies and colleges have formed of homœopathy, they were as much bound to dissociate from them the followers of Hahnemann, as they would be bound to dissociate from them the followers of Morrison, Coffin, St John Long, or of any other extreme and exclusive medical heresy.¹ Nay, should not the expressed doctrines and published tenets of Hahnemann on this point have led the homœopathists to take this step themselves, and of their own accord, instead of forcing so disagreeable a duty upon the Colleges?

In one of the following pages, I have incidentally stated that the religious Mormonite doctrines of Joseph Smith, and the medical homœopathic doctrines of Samuel Hahnemann, were two heresies which were both extending;² “but that was no evidence of the value of either.” This observation, however just as regards the prospects of homœopathy among the “very rich, but always very credulous and very dupable, people of England,” does not seem to hold equally true with regard to the latter course and history of homœopathy on the Continent of Europe. At least in “Bradshaw’s

¹ The Royal College of Physicians of London have not passed any formal general resolutions on the subject of homœopathists; but lately, on an application for its license or degree of Doctor of Medicine being made by a homœopathic practitioner, the College, through its President, Dr Paris, answered as follows:—

“SIR,—The foundation of the Royal College of Physicians was for the purpose of guaranteeing to the public skilful and safe practitioners. The College of Physicians regard the so-called homœopathists as neither skilful nor safe practitioners. Therefore the College cannot, without betraying a sacred trust, give its license to persons whom they regard as wholly unworthy their confidence, and with whom it is not possible they can hold any communion.—I remain, yours, &c., JOHN AYRTON PARIS.”

See *Lancet* Dec. 27, 1851, p. 609.

² On the rapid and recent extension of Mormonism (“the only State Church in America”), see an interesting volume, entitled “The Mormons, or Latter-Day Saints,” lately published in the Illustrated National Library.

Guide to the Continent," published a few months ago (August 1851), the author, Mr Lee, incidentally makes the following observations regarding the present state of homœopathy in its native country of Germany, &c.:—

"At the time," he observes (pp. 290 and 291), "of my first visit, I was anxious to see the Homœopathic Hospital, of which I had previously heard, Leipsic being the head-quarters of this doctrine. I expected to have found at least forty or fifty beds filled with patients; but was rather surprised to find that the building (which is a small house in the suburbs) only contained eight, and even of these all but two or three were unoccupied. At my last visit to Leipsic, I understood that matters were going on badly with homœopathy, which indeed is now comparatively little heard of in Germany and France, except at Vienna, and only requires to be understood by the public for its absurdity to be apparent, though there will always be credulous individuals who are to be caught by any novelty, when presented under a specious appearance, and backed by an unintelligible name. During its whole progress, it never was sanctioned by any individual of eminence in the profession, and was principally taken up as a means of acquiring wealth or a livelihood, by persons who had never been previously heard of, or who were known as having failed to acquire practice by the honourable exercise of their profession, by whom every means were taken to puff it into notice, and to keep public attention directed to it; such as repeated histories of cures, the establishment of dispensaries, of which, I believe, the only one that remains is the above-mentioned at Leipsic, even if that be still in existence; for a few months before my arrival, the house-physician having become convinced, during a residence of some time in the dispensary, of the nullity and danger of homœopathy, gave up his appointment, and published an exposition of the system pursued,¹ with an account of cases, which clearly shows (what had long been evident to the bulk of the profession and the public) that the so-called cures were recoveries from ordinary ailments by the efforts of nature, which were frequently a long time under treatment; whereas, by a proper medication and attention at the outset, they might probably have been removed in a few days; and that many of the more serious cases got worse instead of better, for the

¹ "Ueber die Nichtikiet der Homœopathie. (*On the Nothingness of Homœopathy.*) Leipsic, 1840."

want of active treatment. It must not be supposed that the homœopathists always adhere to the principles of the doctrine. It has not unfrequently happened, that persons who attributed their recovery to homœopathy, were treated allopathically without their being aware of it. In fact, one practitioner in Leipsic, a professed homœopathist, candidly acknowledged that he pursued both plans of treatment, and was accustomed to ask his patients by which method they would be treated, as both were equally good.”¹

¹ “The fate of the Duke di Cannizzaro, well known some years ago in London as the Count St Antonio, is an exemplification of this. Having to take homœopathic globules at intervals for some slight ailment, in order to save trouble he took three doses at once, and died two hours afterwards; the supposed globules being a concentrated preparation of nux vomica.” I have been told that a strong homœopathic convert, who read the first edition of this pamphlet, gravely maintains, that this case of the Duke of Cannizzaro proves, that all the subsequent reasoning about the inefficacy of infinitesimal doses is evidently wrong, seeing they may be so potent as even to poison a man. It is, however, I believe, almost quite unnecessary to add, that the Duke was *not* poisoned by infinitesimal doses of nux vomica in the globules; but by these globules having been fraudulently made up by the attendant physician, so as to contain doses of nux vomica, or rather strychnia, larger than any allopath even would use,—a kind of fraud which homœopathists have been detected practising upon their credulous patients also in this country. (On homœopathic globules, powders, &c., drugged with large doses of morphia, mereury, &c.—See the *Medical Gazette* for 1847, p. 294; *Lancet* for 1850, p. 300; *Pharmaceutical Journal* for 1851, p. 318.) Dr Taylor found one-third of a grain of morphia in a powder *professedly* homœopathic and infinitesimal. I was informed, last summer, by Dr Horace Green, of New York, of another instance of death, from a gentleman swallowing, in sport, a number of homœopathic globules, which, on examination afterwards, were found drugged, not with infinitesimal and innocent, but with large and poisonous doses of strychnia. And a small dose of this acute poison might suffice. A dose of strychnia, (the essential principle of nux vomica), amounting only to half a grain, has proved fatal, within a quarter of an hour, to an adult.

The author of the “Confessions of an Homœopathist,” in referring to the due and adequate drugging of the Hahnemannian doses, amusingly remarks:—“Patients who are sceptical of the truths of homœopathy, from a love of variety, or a hundred other reasons, will consult you. As these persons are inclined to ridicule infinitesimal doses, it is sometimes highly useful to give them powerful doses of various highly concentrated medicines, in globules similar in appearance to all the rest, but consisting of morphia, strychnine, arsenic, corrosive sublimate, and such like: a few of these mingled with your sugar and starch globules will cause effects to be felt by the sceptic which will quickly overcome his disbelief: he generally makes an excellent patient, and often a good decoy-duck. Never scruple in paralytic cases to give strychnine largely, but never allow it to be supposed that you are giving more at a dose than the one-hundred-thousandth of a grain. This rule may be followed in other complaints with other very active drugs, such as croton oil; but this is one of our profoundest secrets, and must be kept so. Were it known, our wonder-working powers would be reduced in the estimation of the public and the regulars.”—P. 197.

Within the last few days I have been informed by Dr George Fleming of Dundee, who has just returned from a six months' sojourn at Vienna, that he attended the Homœopathic Hospital in that city for upwards of a month, but that matters did not seem to go on prosperously with homœopathy even in that school, which is acknowledged to be its central and chief seat. The whole number of pupils in attendance at the Hospital only amounted to five. The cases in the wards were principally of a chronic and subacute type, with numerous cases of a prevailing mucous fever, which was so slight as not to require formal medical treatment. Only one case of acute inflammatory disease was admitted,—viz., a case of pneumonia of four days' standing. This patient died.

In the preceding extract, Mr Lee rightly states, in regard to homœopathy, that its "so-called cures were recoveries from ordinary ailments by the efforts of nature." But it is doubtlessly this apparently successful treatment of cases submitted to homœopathic doses which misleads many a mind unacquainted with the nature of medical evidence. The mere successful termination, however, of a case, or of a series of cases, is no sufficient criterion of the reality of the *cure*. Every quack medicine, from the universal panacea of the old Elixir of Life, or Berkely's tar-water, down to Parr's, or Morrison's, or Holloway's pills; and every quack system of medicine, from the doctrine of Charms or Signatures, down to the more modern systems of Chrono-thermalism, Coffinism, Isopathy, Kinesipathy, Hydropathy, &c. &c., has, as every one knows, its hundreds or thousands of supposed cures or coincidences to boast of. All confidently appeal to the results of so-called experience in proof of their special efficacy and success. It would be strange indeed, and a very unusual exception to a very general law, if homœopathy had not also its numerous alleged cures, and its results of experience, to adduce. With the non-medical public, however, the difficulty of distinguishing what is a cure by nature alone, and what is a cure by nature assisted or controlled by art, makes up the sum of the difficulty of distinguishing between true and spurious medical treatment. It is constantly forgotten that men labouring under disease, even the most acute, and consequently much more so when suffering under slighter ailments, do not as a general rule die, even when untreated. When reasoning on the efficacy of different medicines and different modes of cure, the mind is constantly liable to fall into the greatest errors, by neglecting this leading truth. For when a

man, in a state of disease, takes, for the *purpose of curing* that disease, a millionth or a decillionth of a grain of oyster-shell, or sulphur, or other homœopathic drug, he comes—not very unnaturally, but very illogically—to attribute his cure to the infinitesimal dose of oyster-shell or sulphur, from being unaware that the disease, if left to itself, does very often spontaneously get well, and was virtually left entirely to itself, when he took his Hahnemannian dose of oyster-shell or sulphur.¹ While the homœopathic patient anxiously attributes his cure to the infinitesimal dose which he may have swallowed, the cure is in reality effected by the sanative efforts of nature alone, or by nature aided—not by medicine—but by medical faith,²

¹ “The evidence that is requisite to prove or disprove any proposition in the science of medicine, is of a peculiar kind. It differs entirely from that species of proof which satisfies a court of law. Both direct and circumstantial evidence, which would leave no doubt in the breasts of judges and juries, have often not the slightest tendency to render a medical fact even probable. The declarations, and even the oaths, of the most conscientious, disinterested, and able men, are all insufficient. The reason of this is, that few men, even those of considerable capacity, distinguish accurately between opinion and fact. When a man asserts he has been *cured* of a particular disease by a certain drug, he is apt to think he is declaring a fact which he knows to be true: whereas this assertion includes two opinions, in both of which he may be completely mistaken. The first is an opinion of his having *had* the disease specified; the second, that the medicine employed *removed* the disease. Most people are convinced that they are acquainted with the malady they are afflicted with; they consider it as a mere matter of fact; and when they are cured, they have as little doubt of the remedy that accomplished it. This belief is often strengthened by the confident declarations, and specious behaviour, of the person who exhibits the remedy; and if the person possesses gratitude, this also heightens the delusion. He is thus easily prevailed upon to swear positively both to the disease and the remedy, as if they were both plain facts obvious to the senses; whereas, both the one and the other are frequently beyond the reach of human knowledge. Such cases, to the truth of which the parents will often take their oath, form no stronger presumption of these facts, than the affidavits that are daily sworn to of consumption, gout, or cancer being cured, prove that a specific for these distempers has been discovered. This species of unintentional perjury has been very common during the last century in every part of Europe; and the more improbable the fact is, the more numerous are the affidavits, and the more respectable the signatures. Clergymen, judges, and peers, are daily swearing, that they have been cured of incurable diseases; but the meanest apothecary smiles with contempt when he reads their splendid testimonials. . . . Yet if any one should attempt, by investigating each particular case, to refute it, he would soon discover the impossibility of succeeding. I have been requested, on various occasions, to make such researches, and generally found that the patients were completely convinced of the truth of the attestation, whether the remedy was physic, magnetism, or a tractor. In short, they were ready to take the most solemn oath to what was quite impossible to be true.”—*Moore's Reply to the Intivaccinists*.

Witness, for example, in former times, the thousand supposed cures—of almost all

—by strict diet,—and by proper regimen,—three great and potent auxiliary means which all homœopathists very properly and powerfully avail themselves of. In former times, in cases of weapon-wounds, it was a common practice to leave the wound itself uncared for (except by nature), and undressed for seven days (except by a clean linen bandage, and the blood coagulated around the cut), while the medicated healing salves and bandages were industriously applied several times a-day to the sword that inflicted the wound, and not to the wound inflicted—the healing of the wound being sup-

diseases—by amulets, charms, and sorcery;—of scrofula and “strangely visited people, all swollen and ulcerous, the mere despair of surgery,” by the royal touch—(there are records of 92,000 patients touched by Charles II. alone; for the king, says Wiseman, “cureth more in one year than all the chirurgeons of London have done in an age”);—of ague, epilepsy, deafness, &c. &c., by the stroking of the hands of Valentine Greatrakes;—of palsies and various maladies, by the prayers of Prince Hohenloe, or a touch of the clothes of Francis of Paris;—of patients affected with plague, hydrophobia &c., by a draught of the water in which the Lanarkshire “Lee penny” or Talisman was dipped—(the magistrates of Newcastle, who borrowed it for the use of their townsmen during the plague, were willing in the seventeenth century, to forfeit L.6000 in order to retain this healing “stane set in selver;”)—of the removal of all possible kinds of aches and pains, by the approach of metallic tractors to the suffering parts, or, with equally signal success, by the approach to the parts of pieces of wood, or tobacco-pipes covered with wax, in imitation of the shape and form of the tractors, &c. The besieged inhabitants of Breda, when greatly invalided and bed-ridden with scurvy, &c., were rapidly restored to health and strength, by drinking of the solution of a supposed very precious drug, smuggled in small quantity into the town, for their especial benefit, by the Prince of Orange; and which drug was subsequently confessed to be only a little coloured water. A paralytic patient was cured in a fortnight by Sir H. Davy placing daily under his tongue the bulb of a pocket thermometer, the palsied man believing all the time that the “benign influence” which he immediately felt through him, was owing to his inhaling some infallible specific gas; which, however, was never administered to him. In fact, the past history of medicine and mankind is full of instances illustrating in this way the sanative effects of medical faith. In the interesting travels in Tartary, Thibet, &c., published last year by the French missionary Huc, a sufficiently striking modern instance is mentioned in relation to the general treatment of diseases by the Lamas of Tartary, who have the exclusive practice of medicine allotted to them. The Lama physician, observes M. Huc, is his own apothecary, and gives the specific befitting each case in which his advice is applied for. “The Tartar pharmacopœia rejecting all mineral chemistry, the Lama remedies consist entirely of vegetables pulverised, and either infused in water or made up into pills. If the Lama doctor happens not to have any medicine with him, he is by no means disconcerted; he writes the *names* of the remedies upon little scraps of paper, moistens the papers with his saliva, and rolls them up into pills, which the patient tosses down with the same perfect confidence as though they were genuine medicaments. To swallow (adds M. Huc) the *NAME* of a remedy, or the *REMEDY* itself, comes, say the Tartars, to precisely the same thing.”—*National Library Edition*, p. 75.

posed to be “a cure by sympathy.” In these instances, the knight and soldier attributed the cure of their wounds to the influence of the salve applied to the sword, and not to the sanatory influence and work of nature,—just upon the same amount and kind of evidence as the homœopathic believer of the present day attributes the cure of his disease to the inert and innocent globules which he has swallowed, and not to the kindly operations of the *vis medicatrix*. The true homœopathic physician exhibits his remedies in doses “so inconceivably minute, that no sense, no balance, no microscope, no chemical analysis, no human means whatever, can discover the slightest trace of them in what is administered; you never can have any surety of their presence, or any well-grounded assurance of their absence; they defy the finite faculties of man to form even a distinct conception of them, either with the aid of figures and the eye, or with the help of a vivid imagination.” And, in sober truth, the homœopath thus exhibiting his billionth or decillionth globules, and foolishly imagining that they, and not nature, are effecting the cure in a case of inflammation, or fever, or other disease, is, after all, only too like the German story of the fly inclosed in the luggage van, and proudly supposing that the speed and velocity of the accompanying railway train was owing to the buzzing of its wings, and not to the powers of the attached locomotive engine. Nay, might not the fly, like the Hahnemannian practitioner, argue, and with equal logic too, that the *flight* of the locomotive being homœopathic in relation to its own powers of *flight*, the happy arrival of the train at its destination was the result of the exercise of its homœopathic powers of direction and control? At all events, the disciples of Hahnemann rely upon not very dissimilar instances of the *similia similibus* in evidence of their favourite doctrine.

It has been occasionally argued, that there must be some truth in homœopathy, because some few men of talent, not conversant with medicine,¹ or connected with the medical profession, have, from time

¹ Dr Whately, in the Preface to his work on Logic, remarks:—“A sailor will perhaps despise the pretensions of medical men, and prefer treating a disease by common sense; but he would ridicule the proposal of navigating a ship by common sense, without regard to the maxims of nautical art.” Dr Whately’s remark, no doubt, applies to Archbishops and others, as well as to sailors. In the work itself he correctly observes, “Nothing is more common than to hear a person state confidently, as from his own experience, that such and such a patient *was cured* by this or that medicine; whereas, all that he absolutely *knows* is, that he took the medicine, and that he recovered.”—P. 231.

to time, swallowed Hahnenmanian doses. But, alas! laymen of the highest intellects have, in the history of the world, very often formed, for the time, the highest abettors of almost every kind of transitory medical charlatanry. No child of the present day believes in the curative influence of the sympathetic salve applied to the wounding weapon. Lord Bacon himself, however, "the wisest of men," confessed that he did not entirely discredit its efficacy, or the healing powers of charms and amulets; and Roger Bacon was a believer in a Universal Elixir of Life. The Honourable Robert Boyle, one of the most distinguished philosophers and writers of his day, and a man who was deservedly elected President of the Royal Society, supposed that he cured himself of an ague by wearing a medicated bracelet around his wrist; and the Rev. J. Flamstead, the first Astronomer-Royal, made a voyage to Ireland, to be cured by a touch of the hand of Greatrakes.¹ "The public (correctly observes Dr Marshall Hall) have a strange idea of medicine—an idea little different from superstition; there is for them nothing too trifling, not even Homœopathy; nothing too violent, not even the feats of Priessnitz and of St John Long; nothing too absurd, from the royal touch, or that of a hanged man's hand, down to Perkinism or Mesmerism."

¹ After stating, on his return, that his disease was not so violent as before, Flamstead naively adds, "But whether, through God's mercy, I received this from Mr Greatrakes' touch, or my journey and vomiting at sea, I am uncertain." (See his Autobiography, in Bailey's Account of him, p. 21.)

REPORT OF SPEECH ON HOMŒOPATHY AT THE MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

REPRINTED FROM THE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF MEDICAL SCIENCE, FOR DECEMBER 1851.

[It was moved by *Professor Syme*, “*That the public profession of Homœopathy shall be held to disqualify for being admitted or remaining a Member of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh.*”]

Dr Simpson seconded Mr Syme's motion. And as Mr Syme had taken the present opportunity of answering some of the charges which had been brought against him as to countenancing Homœopathy, Dr S. hoped the Society would accord him also the same privilege, of replying to similar charges which had been brought against himself, from the same quarter, and on the same subject. Dr S. had not read the pamphlet from which Mr Syme had quoted, nor any of the other pamphlets published during the recent discussion; but he had read the first letter which Dr Henderson addressed to one of the Edinburgh newspapers. It appeared at a time when Dr S. happened to be absent from Edinburgh, and he first heard of it when in England. In that letter Dr Henderson stated, that Dr S. had met with him in consultation in the treatment of some cases. On the morning after he arrived in Edinburgh, he waited upon Dr Henderson at his own house, to ask him what these cases were. He had, within the last few years, on two occasions, watched, for some long anxious hours, with Dr Henderson, at the bedside of Dr H.'s own wife, but she was assuredly treated most allopathically, not homœopathically; and, in doing so, no one would accuse Dr S. of abetting or countenancing homœopathy. But, in confirmation of his statement, Dr Henderson mentioned two patients whom Dr S. had attended,—one for uterine disease; the other for disease of the labium. Dr Henderson previously attended these cases, and had certainly asked Dr S. to take charge of them, and Dr S. had done so; but certainly he did not attend them with,

or for, Dr Henderson. Very likely he might have told Dr Henderson, when he happened to see him, what view he took of the cases, but he understood he had full and uncontrolled professional charge of them, and their treatment; and, in treating allopathically what had resisted homœopathy, he was not in any way, he conceived, countenancing homœopathy itself. In the first of these two cases, he applied potassa fusa (not a homœopathic proceeding¹) to the cervix uteri, to remove the state of indurated ulceration. In the other case, after trying various measures (iodine, nitrate of silver, &c.), to reduce a hypertrophied labium, he took Mr Syme with him, who removed a large portion of it with the knife. Dr Henderson adduced another case as one he had alluded to. It was an instance of a small pediculated uterine polypus, the projecting body of which was offering to ulcerate. Dr Henderson had asked him to see this patient, and was present when Dr S. removed the polypus with the scissors. Dr Denman had years ago laid down, as a rule, the necessity, when practicable, of having the evidence of some other practitioner as to the real existence of a polypus; and Dr S. had felt this necessity strongly in the present instance, as the lady had been long the patient of a celebrated London accoucheur, who had been intimate with Denman, but who had overlooked the existence of the polypus, and would possibly, if informed of the measure adopted, deny its propriety. Dr Henderson was the only medical man that the lady would, he believed, have allowed to be present; and she required no kind of constitutional treatment. With the exception of his own wife, this was the only patient at whose bedside he had met Dr Henderson;² and the case was one which did not involve, in any degree, any allopathic or homœopathic principle of treatment. But, even though in this Dr S. did not countenance, or intend to countenance, the practice of homœopathy, he now believed he acted wrongly. With the views which he had latterly come to hold on the nature and character of the so-called practice of homœopathy, he

¹ See particularly, in reference to this case, the postscript to the Letter printed at p. 31. If, as Dr Henderson states, he was present "at the bedside" of this patient with me on my *second* visit, and when probably I applied the potassa (my first visit being, in all likelihood, solely for the detection of the disease), it must have been either to see the affection, or to hold for me the required basin of vinegar and water, a duty which would otherwise have devolved upon a nurse or some female domestic. Assuredly, if he was there "at the bedside," he was there with no view to homœopathic measures or treatment.

² See the same postscript, p. 31.

conceived he had erred in even going thus far. So much had he felt this, that when, two years ago, he gave an account of the above, and some other cases of polypus, to the Society, and afterwards published that account in the "Monthly Journal" for January 1850, he stated always (in confirmation of the accuracy of his report, and in accordance with Denman's rule), the names of the other practitioners who had seen the case with him, when others had been present; but, in the case alluded to, he omitted the name of Dr Henderson, as he felt it was perhaps more than questionable whether he should have met him, at even a slight surgical proceeding, such as the above. The Society, he believed, would agree with him as to the fact, that the profession here, as elsewhere, were not fully awakened to the duty in this respect which they owed to themselves, and to the public, till comparatively lately. Even if Dr Henderson's allegations were all true to a far greater extent, they only amounted to this, that the profession have hitherto been over-indulgent to him and his heresy,—believing, as most of his old medical friends did, that the delusion could only be at most but a temporary one on his part. But because they had been considerate and tolerant to him in times past—and few men taking up such a heretical position as he had done, had ever met with greater consideration and tolerance—this was no reason why they should continue to extend to him their hopeless kindness for the future. And for one, Dr S. rejoiced that the Colleges had taken up the subject, and set the matter on its right footing, by making the question of meeting homœopathists not a question longer left to the responsibility and importunities of individuals, but a question which the profession had fixed and settled in their *corporate* capacity.

The resolutions of the Colleges would, he believed, be doubly useful by not only determining for the future the proper line of duty of the profession towards homœopathists; but by showing also to the homœopathists their exact position in relation to the profession. Almost all the fellows of our two Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons belong to the Medico-Chirurgical Society; and in their capacity as fellows of their respective Colleges, have already unanimously approved of the resolutions of the Colleges regarding the propriety of excluding homœopathists from our professional communion. Most, if not all, of the members of the Medico-Chirurgical Society who do not happen to be fellows of either of the Colleges, hold, I believe, the same views. In requesting, therefore, the practitioners of homœo-

pathy to withdraw themselves from us, the Medico-Chirurgical Society is merely, so far, carrying into practical effect the resolutions of the Colleges on this same subject. And most of the members are probably aware that while very strong legal doubts exist as to public chartered corporations, like the two Colleges, having the power of exercising this right, fortunately, any private unchartered Society, like the Medico-Chirurgical, need fear no legal obstacle in enforcing their judgment. In passing therefore—and it is to be hoped, unanimously—such a motion as that proposed by Mr Syme, we, the members of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, show our anxiety and desire to be rid of the professional presence of homœopathists in all our institutions, by showing them our determination to be rid of them in those places from which we have an undoubted right of enforcing their exclusion. Every proper feeling of respect for ourselves, and every proper feeling of regard for the advancement of the great science which we cultivate, seem now to call upon us for this disagreeable step. For years past they have been allowed, and almost without gainsay or resistance on our part, to hold up to the lay public all the best acknowledged principles of our medical philosophy and practice—principles that have stood the test of thousands of years—as delusions and errors.¹ And they cannot surely deem us either rash or severe in our proceedings, if slowly, but at last, we

¹ My friend, Dr James Russell, in a letter which he has published in favour of homœopathy, observes, “In the meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, some homœopathists were spoken of as holding up all the best acknowledged principles of our medical philosophy and practice—principles which have stood the test of thousands of years—as delusions and errors. I have not (says Dr Russell) so spoken, nor has any one ever spoken so in my hearing.” But see the quotations in our preliminary remarks, p. 2, where we find Hahnemann himself denouncing the principles of common rational medicine as the “exact opposite” of the principles of homœopathy, as different “as night is from day.” With a tone of perfect and indisputable infallibility, Hahnemann elsewhere remarks, “It is impossible that there can be another true best method of curing dynamic diseases, that is, *all* diseases not strictly surgical, besides homœopathy, just as it is impossible to draw more than one straight line betwixt two given points.”—(*Organon*, p. 206). See also, for the same opinion, the same work, p. 156. Amongst other differences, let me instance only one example. We all place much value upon the study of *Morbid Anatomy*. In regard to the internal organic changes (cancer, tubercles, &c., &c.) seen on inspection of the body after death, and which the practiser of the pseudo-art of allopathy is (says he) in the habit “of pointing out to the sorrowing friends,” Hahnemann insinuates, or rather avers (*Organon*, p. 180), (as far as I understand his language), that “those deceitful records, the illustrated works on Pathological Anatomy, exhibit the products of such lamentable bungling” merely as results from allopathy. In another work, addressing allo-

turn round and ask them, as we do to-night, to remove themselves from amongst men whose opinions they systematically affect to deride and decry. Nay, what good can they themselves derive from pertinaciously adhering to a Society like ours, composed of professional men banded together with the view of cultivating medical science in a mode and on principles which they at one time professed to honour, but which they now profess to repudiate? As Mr Syme has properly observed, they have in fact already all but separated from our Society, inasmuch as they have alienated themselves from our Society and College meetings and discussions, as if ashamed of the very step which they had taken. When we ask them to retire from our Society, as Mr Syme's motion proposes, we ask them merely to sever entirely a tie which they have already virtually broken.

Dr S. further argued for the propriety of this motion on another ground,—viz., that the presence of homœopathists at our Society, even if they did come to our meetings, was not at all calculated to promote that principal and leading object of the Medico-Chirurgical Society,—the cultivation and advancement of medical science and knowledge. For he held that no man, or set of men, could in any degree aid in effecting this object, who entertained principles such as those which form the basis of the homœopathic belief. We were as much justified in asking those who had taken up a belief in the follies of Hahnemann and his *Organon* to withdraw from our Society, as a Christian community would be justified in expelling those of its members who came to believe in the follies of Joe Smith and the Mormon Bible. These two heresies—the homœopathic and the Mormonite—seemed, in fact, to have many points in common, though the one belonged to medicine, and could only be properly judged of by physicians; and the other belonged to theology, and could only properly be judged of by clerical men. They were both equally wild. Some homœopathists profess Hahnemann to have been inspired; as the Mormonites hold Smith to have been. Both heresies also were extending, it was true; but that was no evi-

pathic physicians, he observes: "Be not too anxious to insist on the dissection of the corpses of those you have done to death. You would not do it did you know what you thereby revealed to him who knows the truth. . . . There is displayed (in dissections) not what was present before your treatment, as you would fain persuade the relatives, but what was *produced* by your treatment!"—*Hahnemann's Lesser Writings*, by Dr Dudgeon (1851), p. 840.

dence of the value of either. It has been alleged that we have no confession of faith in medicine,—no standard by which we can possibly judge, as clerical bodies do, of the amount of error and deviation of those members of the profession who, from time to time, may choose to set at nought the common principles of that profession. But we have a confession of faith, and a standard by which we *can* judge such men, namely, THE STANDARD OF COMMON SENSE. If we judge by this simple standard the opinions of Hahnemann and his followers, we will find them sadly, very sadly, wanting. In fact, all the dogmas and doctrines peculiar to him, are a tissue of the strangest contradictions and wildest absurdities. If a grown-up man were gravely and seriously to assert to the world that two and two make five, the world would be inclined to look upon him as doubtfully rational, inasmuch as he defied the principles of common sense. And when other grown-up men tell the world that they can cure this or that disease with a billionth or decillionth of a grain of this or that common and probably even inert drug, they express an opinion perhaps even more intensely and directly absurd than the doctrine of two and two making five. All men can at once, because without any great intellectual effort, see through the foolishness and impossibility of the idea of two and two making five, but they do not equally see through the absurdity and impossibility of the more complicated, but equally ridiculous idea, of the billionth or decillionth of a grain of oyster-shell, or chamomile, or belladonna, or the like, having any possible effect whatever upon the economy, for, resting contented with the mere name, they never once think or dream of what in reality a billionth or a decillionth amounts to. Medical jurists and lawyers know of no poison, however strong and powerful, the billionth or decillionth of which would in the least degree affect a man or harm a fly. They tell us that the mere division of their drugs invests them with “tremendous” power;¹ but they could not injure or

¹ Let us imagine for a moment, in the way of illustration, a parallel case, and one where the comparison being taken from another department of art, the question is not easily capable of being rendered complex or casuistical, as has too often happened, when the human body and the art of physic were implicated in it. Suppose (to take the simile of a late writer) a dyer saw a man throw a few pinches of yellow turmeric dye into the Lake of Geneva, mix the turmeric duly and intimately with the water, and then pretend, without end, to dye calicoes yellow by dipping them in one or in every part of the Lake, would the dyer believe there was no trick or deception in it? Can he, as a rational being, possibly credit that a few grains of turmeric would give a power of dying linen yellow to the whole waters of the Lake? Certainly not. And

affect the frailest insect with one of their "tremendous" billionths or decillionths. For what, in fact, is a billionth of a grain? Why, if a single grain of sulphur were divided, as the homœopathists use it and other drugs, into billionths, and if our common parent, Adam, when called into existence some 6,000 years ago, had then begun swallowing a billionth every second, and if he had been permitted to live up to the present time doing nothing but swallowing night and day 60 billionths every minute, he would as yet have completed only a small part of his task. It would require him to work and swallow at the same rate for 24,000 years yet to come, in order to finish one single grain of a drug, which has little effect on his present descendants in doses of 25 or 50 grains. Yet the homœopathists believe that a few of the sulphur billionths which Adam would have swallowed during these 30,000 years would cure, forsooth, an attack of jaundice. If we appeal to our standard—the *standard of common sense*—should not men holding principles of such unmitigated ridiculousness be requested to withdraw from this and other medical societies? But a billionth was, after all, only the sixth dilution of a grain. Homœopathists have dilutions far more refined, and doses far more infinitesimal than that. Some amongst them allege that drugs should rather be used in their thirtieth dilution, or in decillionths, and even some aver, that the smell of such a dose¹ is enough.

yet the homœopathist tells us, forsooth, that a due and intimate admixture of a grain or some fraction of a grain of chamomile, or pulsatilla, or sulphur, would impart the power of curing jaundice, &c., to every glassful of a body of water far, far larger than the waters of such a Lake. If the dyer doubted the power of the infinitesimal dose of turmeric in the Lake in relation to *his* art, surely the physician may equally exercise the same privilege, with regard to the power of a similar or even greatly smaller dose, in relation to any imaginary medicinal properties supposed to be imparted to the waters by its influence.

¹ *Exhibition of Homœopathic Drugs by SMELLING the Infinitesimal Doses of them.*—In the 21st volume of the "Homœopathic Archives," Dr Grosse has published observations and cases to prove, that far higher dilutions than the 30th are alone trustworthy as remedial agents. The 30th dilution divides, as stated in the text, a grain into decillionths. Dr Grosse and his followers use, however, the 200th, 400th, or even 900th dilution; and "he often contents himself with allowing the patient to *smell* the remedy—whether one or more globules at one time I am not aware—waiting patiently for four weeks or so for the completion of the cure, not even permitting a *second* smell or dose; so mild yet certain is the remedial action!" See Dr Forbes' Review, vol. xxii., p. 568. In the latter years of his life, Hahnemann often used to exhibit his infinitesimal globules in the same way, by smell or olfaction, using at the same time also (see next note) the most refined dilutions (as the 30th, &c.) Hahne-

to the outermost planet in our system ; or even as far as the nearest fixed star.¹ A grain of belladonna or other of their drugs, distributed in such decillionth-dose globules, would make continuous lines many million times longer than all the railroads and other roads that ever were, or ever will be, formed on the face of the earth.² And yet, say the homœopaths, take a pin's point and lift out a few of these

¹ Professor Nichol, in treating of the Infinity of the Universe, suggests that there may be systems of worlds situate so deep in space, that the rays of light from them, travelling as rapidly as 592,000,000 miles an hour, do not reach our earth until after passing across the intervening abysses for *thirty millions* of years. The idea of such distances (says he) "stuns the imagination." Yet a grain of medicine divided into decillionth globules of the 30th dilution, and arranged as twenty globules to the inch, would form a continuous string reaching far beyond this inconceivable profundity, on "the verge of telescopic space."—Truly, it is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous.

² *Calculations relative to the amount of the Infinitesimal Doses, &c.*—The calculations in the text refer to drugs in their 30th dilutions ; the 30th dilution having the effect of dividing a grain into decillionths. "When," says a late homœopathic writer, "Hahnemann elaborated his theory of chronic diseases, he rapidly mounted the potential scale, and forthwith declared that the 30th dilution was preferable in almost all cases to the less refined dilutions. Subsequently to that he issued no new publication, and hence it is believed that the genius of the master remained stationary. This is an error. From the years 1831-32, Hahnemann employed dilutions still more refined, and recommended them to his disciples. In an unpublished correspondence with Dr Mauro, Hahnemann insisted more and more upon greater and greater attenuations. In this correspondence, leaving the 30th dilution, he speaks only of the 50th, 60th, and 80th dilutions. About the same time, Dr Korsakoff prepared a 1500th dilution of sulphur, and proclaimed its efficacy." Abridged from "*Doctrines de l'Ecole de Rio*" (Paris, 1849), pp. 78, 79.

Korsakoff carried, as we have just observed, the process of dilution up to the 1500th dilution, and thought besides that "with one dry medicated globule he could infect an unlimited number of unmedicated globules with the same medical power." From Korsakoff's experiments, "this much (says Hahnemann) is deducible, that since a *single dry globule*, imbibed with a high medicinal dynamization (as the 100th or 1000th dilution) communicates to 13,500 unmedicated globules, with which it is shaken for five minutes, medicinal powers fully equal to what it possesses itself, without suffering any diminution of power itself, it seems that this marvellous communication takes place by means of proximity and contact, and is a sort of *infection*."—*Lesser Writings*, p. 860. In the high dilutions of Grosse, mentioned in the last note, and amounting from the 200th to the 900th, or even higher (1500th), the powerful frictions which the medicines receive in their preparation make (it is averred) "their powers quite *ungovernable*." (*Journal of Homœopathy*, vol. vii. p. 445.) And yet Fleischmann, Muller, and other homœopaths, aver they could find no result whatever in employing them. Such is experience. The number of shakes given to a bottle of medicine, in preparing it, or subsequently, modifies mightily, according to Hahnemann, the resulting potency of the drug. (See *Organon*, p. 325). "The homœopathic medicine, says Hahnemann, becomes

belladonna globules spread out on these interminable lines of road, and you will cure with them a case of scarlet fever. Surely men

potentised at every division and diminution, by trituration or succussion—a development of the inherent powers of medicinal substances, which was never dreamed of before *my* time, and which is of so powerful a character, that of late years I have been compelled, by convincing experience, to reduce the *ten* succussions (or shakes of the bottle), formerly directed to be given after each attenuation, to *two*.” He averred that in this way the simple carrying of medicines about in the pocket, greatly “potentised” them, and consequently warned his disciples against this danger. He warned them, for instance, against giving Drosera in hooping-cough that had been prepared beyond the 15th dilution, and with more than 20 shakes, as being too strong, from the number of shakes given it. And yet Jen-nichen’s preparations of that drug in the 500th dilution were shaken 6000 times. We cannot, however, doubt that both answered equally well. Dr Nunez of Madrid employs his drugs in the 2000th dilution, and boasts, of course, of “the results of his experience” as quite successful.—(*Journal de la Médecine Homœopathique*, for November 1846).

Soon after the first promulgation of Hahnemann’s doctrines, it was suggested, that “if the decillionth part of a grain have any efficacy, an ounce of medicine (Epsom salts) thrown into the Lake of Geneva would be sufficient to physic all the Calvinists of Switzerland.” But later and careful systematic calculations have shown that this is stopping very far short of the truth. The 10th solution alone would, as M. Cap has shown in the “*Journal de Pharmacie*” for 1845, require a body of water 500 times greater than the bulk of the Lake of Geneva, or a sea somewhat larger than the Gulph of Venice. To make the 11th solution, a quantity of water greater than the Mediterranean would be necessary; the 12th solution could scarcely be accomplished in an ocean 500 fathoms deep, and covering the *whole* surface of the earth; while the 30th or decillionth solution, to be performed on 15 grains of a homœopathic medicine, would require a layer of water 1300 yards in depth, and extending over a space equal to the *whole area of the Solar System*. If the whole Solar System were buried in an ocean extending in depth from the sun to Neptune, it would not form a sufficient medium for dissolving the same quantity of medicine down to the 500th, &c., dilutions of Drs Korsakoff and Grosse. Yet, they allege, a few sips of the proper medicine properly dissolved in such enormous medicated seas and oceans, infallibly acts and cures, and that each sip is of “terrific potency” if the drug is duly mixed.

Perhaps in no point, in relation to their fantastical doctrine of infinitesimal doses, do the homœopaths show more true weakness and less precalculation, than in admitting similar, or at least not different, therapeutic properties and potency to the same drug in different dilutions, and thus allowing two or more of their sect to use equally against the same disease either a 3d dilution (a millionth), or a 30th dilution (a decillionth) of the same drug; or the still far higher dilutions of it recommended by Hahnemann, Korsakoff, and Nunez. In admitting the same, or a similar efficacy, to the 3d and the 30th dilutions (not to go further), the whole question of the power of infinitesimal doses, is, in one sense, abandoned; for (not to drive the comparison to the 100th or 1000th dilutions) if even the 30th dilution (one decillionth) succeeds as well as the 3d (one millionth), it is plain that neither can have any effect at all. “For what (observes Dr Wood) does such an assertion amount to? An absurdity so gross that language fails to express it. It is to assert, that if a medicinal substance be divided, not into nine million separate atoms, but into atoms nine million separate times; that is to say

not consequently well exceed a few shillings, or a few pounds at most, and need not surely require renewal during the longest lifetime. And yet these same homœopathic dilutions seem convertible, through an adequate amount of credulity on the part of the public, into annual incomes sufficient for the maintenance of three thriving drug establishments! To effect this, the druggists must sell their pharmaceutical exiguities at something like a billionth or decillionth of profit. He did not blame the druggists for this, or for charging, as they did, very smartly for the globules which they sold. Their high price was indeed in itself a more potent therapeutical agency than any problematical medicinal matter which they contained; for what a man pays high value for, must, he naturally believes, be of high value.¹ But surely we may well smile at the deluded buyers zealously emptying their purses in the purchase of such dreamy nonentities.

Nor did it seem necessary that the globules of sugar of milk should go even through the form of being medicated with their supposed quadrillionths, quintillionths, &c., of the drug whose name they bore. At least it had been averred that some in England who affected to manufacture these medicated globules on the large scale, had found that the sugar of milk, of which these globules were composed, answered just as well with or without a dip in the pretended dilutions.² And as far as regarded the patient and the disease, it

¹ According to Dr Schubert's evidence regarding the opinions and practices of Hahnemann, the founder of homœopathy was perfectly aware of this fact. "Hahnemann never hesitated (says Dr Schubert), to promise recovery to every patient, without concerning himself about the nature of the malady; and I have seen some ludicrous results follow these predictions. His plan was to demand for the cure, in the shape of a fee, a good round sum—one half to be paid down,—unlimited confidence in his treatment, doses of sugar of milk (undrugged), and a particular diet. The dieting, which simply consisted in the denial of all stimuli, he considered to be absolutely necessary in order to allow nature to have free play. Unlimited confidence in the treatment was his great support in carrying out this system; and he invariably insisted upon this from every patient, well knowing that it was the important secret of life and death in such cases. Further, he used to observe, 'We must not attend patients for nothing, or let them have even a pennyworth of medicine gratuitously; the greater the sum paid for physic and physician, the greater is the confidence placed in both.'"—*Casper's Wochenschrift*, for March 1845.

² See a statement by Dr Glover of Newcastle, in the *Lancet* for January 11, 1831, regarding a London firm manufacturing 60 lbs. weight of homœopathic drugs every fortnight; but who were "so well aware (says Dr Glover) of the farce, as never even to attempt the troublesome mode of manufacture required by homœopathy, so that

mattered nothing what globule was given—whether one of charcoal or of arsenic. They were both so diluted as, of course, to be entirely inefficacious: and all the drugs and globules in a homœopathic medicine-box being rendered equally null and innocent by their previous reduction, any one of them could readily and successfully replace any other.¹

Early in the history of homœopathy in Edinburgh, Dr Simpson

the drugs really and truly contain nothing.” In a late letter, Dr Glover informs me, that the agent of a London wholesale firm, which is either the first, or about the first, house in the line, made the statement in question before witnesses, in the house of the Messrs Gilpin and Company, Druggists, Newcastle.

¹ *Infinitesimal Doses and Homœopathy necessarily connected together in Practice.*—

Let me here remark, that some homœopathsists, aware of the double absurdity implied,—1st, In the alleged medicinal effect of their infinitesimal doses; and, 2d, In the strange circumstance of different homœopathsists obtaining exactly the same supposed results from drugs whether of the 3d, 30th, or 300th dilution, have anxiously argued that homœopathy is one thing, and the employment of infinitesimal doses quite another. And it is no doubt true, that the alleged ‘universal’ and ‘immutable’ homœopathic law (*similia similibus curantur*), might be true altogether from the supposed therapeutic potency of the minute dose; but it is also equally true, that when Hahnemann tried to treat diseases in accordance with the homœopathic law, but with the large or ordinary effective doses of the medicines indicated, he made his patients worse, for “when given in excessive quantity it produces a greater disease than that present;” and he descended from the ordinary doses to smaller and smaller quantities, in order, as he states, to avoid the injury of the diseased parts and *aggravation* of the disease, a result that would naturally follow if an ordinary dose were given of a drug capable of producing, by its homœopathic similarity of action, symptoms similar to those under which the patient was already labouring.—(See his *Medicine of Experience*, 1805; *Organon*, p. 321). “For this reason a medicine (says he), even though it may be homœopathically suited to the cure of the disease, does *harm* in every dose that is too large, the MORE HARM the LARGER the dose, and by the magnitude of the dose it does more harm the greater its homœopathicity.”—(*Organon*, p. 321). “With them (very large ordinary doses) patients may,” says Dr Black, “be treated homœopathically; but then we may frequently expect a positive *increase* of the disease, or even *death*. The experience of such painful and dangerous aggravations, in no case necessary to cure, led Hahnemann to employ minute doses.”—(*Treatise on Homœopathy*, p. 81). “The *minutest* doses (says Hahnemann) are *always* able to overcome the disease.” And specially, he contemptuously denominates those homœopathic physicians “*wiseacres*,” who affect to disbelieve the perfect and certain medicinal power and potency of decillionth doses, or drugs in the 30th dilution. (See Dr Dudgeon’s *Edit. of the Organon*, p. 318.) In elsewhere insisting upon the necessity of the very smallest doses of the selected remedy, Hahnemann adds,—“The very smallest, I repeat; for it holds good, and will continue to hold good, as a homœopathic therapeutic maxim, *not to be refuted by any experience in the world*, that the best dose of the properly selected remedy is always the very smallest one, in one of the high dynamizations (as the 30th dilution), as well for chronic as for acute diseases,—a truth that is the inestimable property of pure homœopathy.”—(*Organon*, p. 289.)

had witnessed a circumstance proving, if any proof were required in such an instance, that all homœopathic globules act alike,—that any one may replace any other in the list; and that it is the belief with which the drug is taken, and not the infinitesimal drug itself, which produces the effect ascribed to it. Some eight or ten years ago, an old schoolmate of Dr Simpson having begun business as a homœopathic druggist in Liverpool, kindly sent Dr S. a present of a small box of homœopathic medicines; and a very beautiful painted box it was. During the time it was in Dr S.'s possession, he put it only to one use, viz., he gave it as an occasional plaything to his eldest son, who was then a child. The boy, revelling in his permitted amount of mischief, used in his sport to uncork the small bottles, empty their globules into a heap, and then refill the bottles from the general mass. Of course, this had speedily the effect of altering and disarranging the contents of the entire lilliputian drug shop; the globules pertaining to the different bottles were more or less thoroughly mixed together; and sometimes, when the child was tired of his occupation, others at last refilled the bottles from the general heap. A professional brother¹ happening to call at Dr S.'s house one day when Dr S. was absent from home, saw the box, and put it in his pocket. Many weeks afterwards, the new proprietor of the box met Dr S., and told him that he had been trying to practise homœopathically, at which Dr S. expressed his regret; and he added, that he had seen some wonderful effects and cures from using the drugs contained in Dr S.'s own former homœopathic box! Wrongly perhaps, as Dr S. now thinks, he did not at the time, tell this physician that the globules of the bottles which he had been using were elaborately commixed; but the whole struck him as so good a joke at the moment, that he thought he would reserve it to bring it out upon his friend on some future and more ripe occasion, for the purpose of laughing him out of his homœopathic delusion. But, unfortunately, matters hastened rapidly on, the physician became more and more a homœopathist, and then it became too serious a matter to joke about, when he actually published a list of supposed homœopathic cures. The whole thing assumed so grave an aspect, that he never mentioned it, until the physician, who had appropriated the box, had become far too hardened in his homœopathic practices to allow of any hope of his re-conversion. From the time that the

¹ To wit,—Professor Henderson.

physician in question mentioned the results of using the box, till within the last few months, he and Dr S. never spoke on the subject of either the box or homœopathy. But the conversation turning on this last occasion upon the box, he remarked to Dr S., that Dr S. had no right to say, as he had heard reported, that it was the use of Dr S.'s commixed box of medicines that had converted him to homœopathy ; because, as he added, he had another box of homœopathic drugs at the time he began, and Dr S. had no power of knowing that it was not this other box that he had employed. Dr S., of course, confessed that he had no means of knowing that it was Dr S.'s former box which he had employed, excepting this, that previously he had distinctly and deliberately told Dr S. that it was Dr S.'s old box that he had used, and the results of which had effected the change in him at the time of the first conversation. And Dr S. felt sure of one other circumstance, namely, that if that physician, or any other homœopathist, would use homœopathic boxes equally commixed as that which Dr S. once possessed, they would get results just as good as they would obtain from the supposed non-mixed globules. There is a homœopathic hospital now in London. If the physicians of it will take twenty or thirty boxes of homœopathic drugs, and allow any one to commix the contents of a few of them, and to furnish others with nothing but sugar and milk globules, they would find it, he believed, utterly and totally impossible, after trials of weeks or months, to point out the medicated from the non-medicated boxes, and those whose contents were thoroughly mixed, from those whose contents were all in due form and order. And he felt assured that the Society and the medical profession would join him in his sincere conviction and belief, that such an experiment was not in the least degree objectionable, in as far as the good and safety of the patients of the homœopathic hospital were concerned.¹

¹ Hahnemann himself even, would, in his hours of sincerity, probably have sanctioned the truth of this statement. It has been often questioned whether Hahnemann, like the "prophet" Joe Smith, used the talents bestowed upon him only to dupe others, or whether he was enough of a visionary to believe in his own various incredible doctrines. The published evidence of one who knew Hahnemann, Dr Schubert of Dramburg, goes so far to prove that the founder of homœopathy was himself far more knavish than foolish. "We hear it (remarks Dr Schubert) continually asserted, that Hahnemann placed no confidence in the powers of nature in curing disease ; but from my intercourse with him, I am quite satisfied that no physician ever trusted more to the *vis medicatrix naturee*. It requires, indeed, but very little reflection to enable us to perceive, that it was through the closest acquaintance

For whether the drugged or undrugged globules were exhibited, one and the same result would follow,—viz., that the diseases of the patients would, under either mode of management, be allowed to go on uncontrolled and uninfluenced to their own natural termination. Fortunately for such an inane and negative practice as homœopathy, most diseases, even acute inflammation of the lungs, &c., did, in a large proportion of cases, tend ultimately towards a successful and happy termination, through the spontaneous and unaided efforts of nature alone;¹ and the swallowing of a few infinitesimal globules of any kind would not alter in any degree this result. But Dr S. feared that if he spoke longer he might fall into the error alluded to by Mr Syme,—viz., the error of discussing the merits, or rather demerits, of homœopathy; while the Society were met, not for this purpose, but for the purpose of expressing their judgment in regard merely to the propriety of practitioners of homœopathy withdrawing from the Society.

There was another class of practitioners who ought, he thought, certainly to be included in the category of those whose names should be removed from the list of members. He alluded to such practitioners as were not simple-minded, but sincere homœopathists. He alluded to those who pretended to be homœopathists, but acted as allopathists,—who doctored people according as people themselves wished, either with drachms of drugs, or billions of a grain of the

with the curative powers of nature, that Hahnemann was led to adopt his new system of medicine. I have heard him declare that he looked with contempt upon medical practice, and he thought that a patient would be none the worse if left to himself. He had a thorough conviction that all curable diseases might, under proper attention to diet, be removed by the efforts of nature alone. He looked upon these as his sheet-anchor. On one occasion he said to me, 'I give medicines but very seldom, although I always prescribe small powders. I do this for the sake of keeping up in the patient's mind the firm belief that each powder contains a particular dose of some medicine. Most patients will get well by adopting a simple mode of living, and by placing a boundless confidence in their medical attendants. Ordinary practitioners know nothing of this practically, although they are always talking of the healing powers of nature.'"—*Casper's Wochenschrift* for 1845. On his use of small unmedicated powders, to "quiet the patient or his friends," see Dudgeon's Edition of the *Organon*, p. 302.

¹ The later observations of Louis, Grisolle, Dietl, and others, have shown this to hold true with regard to a large class of cases of *uncomplicated* pneumonia, and other acute inflammations; just as it was previously known to hold true with regard to a large class of cases of *uncomplicated* fever; and the observations of the homœopathists have fully, though unwittingly, confirmed the same important pathological remark.

same; who wished to be considered homœopathists, but, as had been often detected, drugged their globules and tinctures with active doses of the most powerful medicines; who spread out the snare of homœopathy as a golden man-trap to catch credulous and trusting patients, and afterwards either openly or surreptitiously applied to them all the usual means employed in the armentarium of rational medicine. Some men pretended they could honestly and honourably mix up the two practices.¹ Most physicians naturally doubted whether any man could in honour and honesty combine such incompatible incongruities. Neither any true homœopath² nor any true allopath would

¹ "The public who see homœopathic doctors, generally conceive that their medicines are given to them in the attenuations of Hahnemann, in quantities ranging from a millionth to a decillionth of a grain. 'Little pills' were lauded by a platform speaker at the homœopathic meeting in Freemasons' Tavern; but his laudations were perhaps applauded by men (homœopathic practitioners) who give as freely, or more freely, than many of us would dare to do, strychnia, aconite, and other such like drugs, the most terrible doses of which may be administered in drops, and fractions of a grain. Large doses of our common medicines, as I well know, are also every day prescribed by men who come forward as candidates for homœopathic practice among the wealthy and noble. 'Little pills' may be, but certainly a little quantity of phyle is not, a criterion by which to know the practitioners who range themselves under the flag of homœopathy. Dr Quin openly advised what I may term very large doses of camphor in cholera; and in my own experience, I have found that patients had been taking along with the globules, (under the name of adjuvants), the same medicines, and in the same doses, which we employ, and which experience has sanctioned. What is *now* called homœopathic practice may, I aver, mean any kind of practice. I have said enough to show you how vain it is to define what is meant by homœopathic practice, when I mention, that, at a recent meeting of the 'Annual Congress' of homœopathists, there was present, as a large participator in the business, Dr William McDonald, who, besides being a homœopathic practitioner, is a leading man as a believer in, and lecturer on, the highest degrees of mesmerism. Then Dr Macleod (whose autobiography I hold in my hand), the keeper of a water-cure inn at Benrhydding, in Yorkshire, is a chosen champion of homœopathy; a man whom the *Homœopathic Times* delights to honour, and who treats his patients by globules and wet sheets. Dr Henderson of Edinburgh, Dr Calvert Holland, and Mr Kingdon of London, prescribe infinitesimal or ordinary doses, according to their own or their patient's fancy. I select these gentlemen as my examples, because their acts are before the public in print. The medical creed of these practitioners it is impossible for us to comprehend."—*Report of the Speeches on Irregular Practice, delivered at the Nineteenth Anniversary Meeting of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, held at Brighton, August 13 and 14, 1851. Speech of Dr Cormack, p. 10.*

² Since this speech was first published in the "Monthly Journal," my colleague, Professor Henderson, has avowed and defended the mixed practice. He says, "I rejoice to say that I know many physicians, who, while they adhere to the homœopathic law as the great regulator of their practice, consider themselves entitled, in the

give this spurious set credit for their integrity of purpose and principle. If any such were members of the Society, let them certainly

free exercise of their profession as independent men, to prescribe any quantity of medicine they think necessary for their patients, and where the homœopathic principle cannot be of service to them, whether from its own present or necessary limitations, or their insufficient acquaintance with it, consider themselves not only at liberty, but bound in duty, to employ any other expedients for the benefit of their employers that may be within their knowledge." I am unwilling to characterise such a doctrine in the terms which most medical men would agree that it deserved; for, with others, I confess I cannot see how the same medical man can himself conscientiously treat the same disease, as pleurisy, pneumonia, &c., either with full allopathic measures and doses, as bleeding, antimony, &c., or only with infinitesimal doses of phosphorus, hyonia, aconite, &c.; or how in consultation he can approve of some practitioners following the one plan, and of other practitioners pursuing the other. But I gladly leave the due estimation of such a combination of principles and practices to the criticism of Hahnemann himself, who, in the last edition of his *Organon*, pointedly denounces, to use his own words, "the new mongrel sect who assume the honourable name of Homœopathists, and even seem to employ medicines in form and appearance homœopathic, but used by them without the slightest deliberation (*quidquid in buccam venit*), and who, when the unsuitable remedy does not immediately give relief, in place of laying the blame on their unpardonable indolence and laxity in performing the most important and serious of all human affairs, ascribe it to homœopathy, which they accuse of great imperfection; if the truth be told, its imperfections consist in this, that the most suitable homœopathic remedy for each morbid condition, does not spontaneously fly into their mouths like roasted pigeons, without any trouble on their own part. They know, however (Hahnemann continues), how from frequent practice to make up for the inefficiency of the scarcely half homœopathic remedy, by the employment of allopathic means, that come much more handy to them, among which one or more dozens of leeches applied to the affected part, or little harmless venesections to the extent of eight ounces, and so forth, act an important figure; and should the patient, in spite of all this, recover, they extol their venesections, leeches, &c., alleging that had it not been for these, the patient would not have been brought through, and they give us to understand, in no doubtful language, that these operations, derived, without much exercise of genius, from the pernicious routine of the old school, in reality contributed the best share towards the cure; but if the patient die under the treatment, as not unfrequently happens, they seek to console the friends by saying that 'they themselves were witnesses that every thing conceivable had been done for the lamented deceased.' Who (adds Hahnemann) would do this frivolous and pernicious tribe the honour to call them after the name of the very laborious but salutary sect, Homœopathic physicians?" *Organon*, p. 231; see also pp. 169 and 206. And in the preface to the last edition of this work, he remarks,—“That some erring physicians, who would wish to become homœopathists, engraft some, to them more convenient, allopathic bad practices, upon their nominally homœopathic treatment, is owing to ignorance of the doctrine, laziness, contempt for suffering humanity, and ridiculous conceit; and, in addition to unpardonable negligence in searching for the best homœopathic specific for each case of disease, has often a base love of gain, and other dishonourable motives, for its spring. And for its result?—That they cannot cure all important and serious diseases (which pure and careful homœopathy can), and that they send many of their patients to that place

and undoubtedly be requested to retire. Their conduct was the conduct of the poor Swiss clergyman, who, living in a district partly of Romanists and partly of Protestants, thought it no discredit to eke out his living by preaching a strong Romanist sermon to the Romanists in the forenoon, and a strong Protestant sermon to the Protestants in the afternoon. He repeated, that he hoped and understood that Mr Syme's motion included this hybrid and equivocal class of practitioners.

whence no one returns, whilst the friends console themselves with the reflection, that everything (including every hurtful allopathic process) has been done for the departed."—*Preface to the Fifth Edition of Organon*, p. 13.

"There is (says another homœopathic writer, lately practising in Edinburgh,) a class of practitioners who merit the indignation of every right-minded man,—a class who, viewing medicine only as a trade, a mere barter for pounds, shillings, and pence, act obsequiously, as the patient wishes; at his desire, their practice is either homœopathic or allopathic. Such unprincipled procedure admits of no apology."—Dr Black's *Treatise on Homœopathy*, p. 163.

LETTER TO DR RUTHERFORD RUSSELL.

DEAR SIR,—Since receiving your letter on Friday, I have really not had ten minutes of spare time to answer it. And, let me add (notwithstanding your second note of yesterday), I do not, after all, see how you could very well expect me to take the trouble of writing a reply. For you state,—“I observe that, in a speech you delivered at the recent meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, you speak of having met homœopathic practitioners only twice, and on both occasions referred to it was Professor Henderson.”

Now you must excuse me saying, and I say it with pain, that you never did “observe” any such statement in my speech; for no such statement exists in it.

You add,—“You must have forgotten that you have met me upon several occasions.” Not at all; but the subject of meeting or not meeting with you was not in any way, I assure you, before the Medico-Chirurgical Society; and even the remarks about meeting Dr Henderson were only incidentally, perhaps improperly, introduced, when the real matter of consideration before the Society was, in truth, a matter of principle, and not of persons; and when the question was, not what we had done with homœopathists in times past, but what relations we should have with them for the future.

As you seem in your note to think it desirable that I should state that I had met you at ease, let me add, what of course I have no hesitation in doing, that in former times I have seen with you four or five of your nearest female relatives; and a young lady (the ease you particularise in your letter) suffering under occasional hysterical mania, to prevent whom from being forced into circumstances of apparent danger to her state of mind and health, I signed a certificate or statement of her condition.

It is possible I may have seen one or two other cases with you; but, if so, I have no recollection of them. I have other and far more important matters to burthen my memory with.

And do not suppose, as your letter would seem to imply, that I am in the least degree ashamed to acknowledge having met you at these cases in times past. In this respect, others and I have formerly (and perhaps reprehensibly) erred through mere excess of good

nature and kindness towards you. But that is entirely a different question from the question of meeting you or other homœopathists for the future, now that the Colleges have declared, in their corporate capacity, the impropriety of even *seeming* to admit in any degree the legitimacy of so-called homœopathic medicine, by the members of our profession meeting at cases with practitioners of homœopathy, for diagnostic or other purposes. In that opinion, and in that step, I most heartily concur. You believe that a millionth, or a billionth, or a decillionth of a grain of this or that medicine, may cure this or that disease; and I give *you* full credit for your honesty of belief. But at the same time you must accord *me* also full credit for my honesty of belief, that, in all this, homœopathists practise upon their own minds, and upon the minds of the public, the grossest deception. And if others and I have now attained (as the profession at large have) to this conviction, you can neither, I think, feel astonished nor irritated at our coming at last to the conclusion of refusing, both as a body and as individuals, to abet in any way what we conscientiously look upon as a system of consummate charlatanry.—Yours, &c.,

J. Y. SIMPSON.

P.S.—As I have stated in the body of the letter, it is possible I may have seen with you one or two cases more than those I have alluded to, without being able to recall any remembrance of them whatever at present. Your friend Dr Henderson has, in his letter, brought back to my recollection, what I had entirely forgotten,—viz., seeing with him, years ago, a previous patient of his, a member of Mr Chalmers' family, who was afterwards placed for some time under my professional charge. He states also, that in the case of a patient of his, where I applied *potassa fusa* for induration of the cervix uteri, he was with me at one of my visits; or at least he has brought forward a letter from a relative saying as much. Most assuredly, if such were the fact, I have not the very slightest remembrance of it, and I have quite in vain attempted to recall any recollection of my ever meeting him at the bedside of that patient. Had it been otherwise, I would have freely acknowledged the circumstance, when referring to the case in the speech you allude to; just as in it I freely acknowledge Dr H. being present with me in a case in which I removed a polypus from the uterus.—J. Y. S.

To Dr R. Russell.

52, Queen Street,
Tuesday, 9th December 1851.

MODERN HAHNEMANNIC THEOLOGY.

AFTER duly denouncing the "old school physicians" as using a *materia medica* "founded mainly on conjecture and false deductions mixed up with falsehood and fraud," and as guilty in their practice of injury and destruction to their patients, and of "cruelty towards their sick fellow-creatures," Hahnemann observes, "It was *high time* for the wise and benevolent Creator and Preserver of mankind to put a stop to this abomination, (and) to command a cessation of these tortures," &c. And, at the end of a long section of declamations, he again adds,—"It was high time that He should permit the discovery of homœopathy."—(*Organon*, p. 55).

At page 15, I have already stated that, apparently in consonance with these ideas, "some homœopathists profess Hahnemann to have been inspired." In one of the latest works on homœopathy, published in Paris in 1849 (*à l'Institut Homœopathique*), Hahnemann is spoken of as "a messenger from heaven," as "the new evangelist," and as "the most inspired of discoverers (*le plus inspiré de revelateurs*)" sent to render medicine, like the other sciences, properly Christian. That this object, however, might be accomplished, it was necessary, argues the author, that a victim as an expiatory sacrifice should be offered up, "to conquer the indifference of the vulgar, who demanded the crucifixion of Christ and the release of Barabbas." "God (he adds) willed that this expiatory victim should be born upon the steps of a throne." This expiatory victim "for the *physical* redemption of humanity" was, he proceeds to prove, the Prince Alphonso, heir-apparent to the Imperial throne of Brazil, and who died a few days after birth, from being given to a consumptive nurse, and for want, as the author alleges, of proper homœopathic advice. "It seems (he concludes) that it is only by an excess of evil that man can return to good. In order that humanity should renounce the worship of false gods, nothing less than a

DEICIDE¹ was necessary. It is by a REGICIDE¹ that allopathy behoved to mark its last hour.”² But “a finishing character was (writes the author) wanting to the new art (of homœopathy),—the character of the Infinite. It forms the certain mark of the reform being accomplished under Christian influence ; all the sciences of the past are limited and material ; those of the future all carry man to the idea of the Infinite, and allow us to witness the Omnipresent image of the Divinity.” Hence, forsooth, according to this author, the *Infinitesimal* character of the doses used by homœopathists,—“ that discovery which forms the most beautiful gem in the immortal crown of Hahnemann.”³—(*Doctrine de l'Ecole de Rio, &c., Con-*

¹ These two words are thus printed in capitals in the original.

² Dr Mure, the author of the work in question, founded, with other homœopathic practitioners, a Homœopathic Medical School at Rio in 1845, and in 1847 this school publicly conferred their first licenses or certificates upon a number of their disciples. The candidate, before the teachers and a public assemblage, declared his profession of faith, “ My hand upon my conscience (*le main sur la conscience*), and my eyes upturned to heaven, I embrace homœopathy. . . . I acknowledge the doctrine of Hahnemann to be the only true medical doctrine,” &c. &c. And the candidate was subsequently required to take an oath, signed by himself and two witnesses. The following is a part of the oath:—“ By our Saviour Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for us, redeeming our sins by his precious blood, &c. I swear : 1. To redeem the sufferings of the sick by the preventive sufferings of pure experimentation, which I will make myself, or by means of persons animated by the like charity ; 2. Not to treat patients but by medicaments whose effects have been well proved, which are in the domain of pure homœopathy, as I have acknowledged and declared in my profession of faith ; 4. To propagate the knowledge of the principles of pure homœopathy by all lawful means in my power,” &c. I have seen the above work reviewed and analyzed at considerable length in a British journal of homœopathy, and this oath quoted without a word of blame or criticism as to any evidence of illiberality in such a solemn oath being imposed upon medical candidates. And yet, a short time subsequently, one of the editors wrote a letter, full of “ intense indignation,” in the same journal, against the “ folly, criminality, and cruelty,” of asking a candidate for a medical degree at a British University, if he had any belief in the medicinal efficacy of infinitesimal doses.

³ Hahnemann himself gives another explanation of the use of the infinitesimal division of drugs, viz., that it produces “ a real SPIRITUALISATION of the dynamic property ” of each drug—(P. 823). “ But (says he) the mode of attenuating practised in homœopathy, effects not only an equal distribution of the medicinal drop throughout a great proportional quantity of unmedicinal fluid, but it also happens—and this is of infinitely greater importance—that by the succussion and trituration employed, a change is effected in the mixture, which is so *incredibly great*, and so *inconceivably curative*, that this development of the SPIRITUAL power of medicines to such a height, by means of the multiplied and continued trituration and succussion of a small por-

tenant une Exposition Methodique de l'Homœopathie. Introduction, p. 34, &c.)

Such painful suggestions and wild statements are not limited to the homœopathic literature of France. Guided by a similar spirit, some English homœopathists have anxiously attempted to show that the doctrines and practices of Hahnemann are duly foreshadowed in Scripture. During the present year, a sermon was preached in London by the Rev. Thomas Everest, Rector of Wickwar, in aid of the Hahnemann Hospital: and has been subsequently published. The sermon is replete with Hahnemannian theology, as well as Hahnemannian medicine. The reverend author, who boasts of "some years of intimacy" with Hahnemann, conceives it was not likely that "the sacred pages of the Word of God should be *quite silent* on the subject" of the discoveries which his friend imagined he had made some nineteen centuries afterwards. And accordingly he finds they are not "silent." One of Hahnemann's supposed highest and greatest generalizations in pathology was, the dogma or doctrine that about seven-eighths of all the chronic diseases of the men and women of this and other ages were the result of the unobserved and unknown presence of *Psora*, or (to use its plain English synonym) Itch, and were to be cured by the remedies capable of curing Itch.¹ But, argues the Rev. Thomas Everest, our Saviour

tion of medicinal substance with ever more and more dry or fluid unmedicinal substances, deserves incontestibly to be reckoned among the greatest discoveries of this age."—*The Lesser Writings of Hahnemann.* Edited by Dr Dudgeon.

¹ Hahnemann, in his *Organon* (p. 183), tells us that he spent twelve years of his life in tracing the origin of an "incredibly large number of chronic affections" to their true source, namely, Itch,—“This thousand-headed monster of disease,” as he terms it, “does,” to quote his own words, “after the completion of the internal infection of the whole organism, announced by a peculiar cutaneous eruption, sometimes consisting only of a few vesicles, accompanied only by intolerable voluptuous tickling itching (and a peculiar odour), the monstrous internal chronic miasm—the psora, the only real fundamental cause and produce of all the other numerous, I may say, innumerable, forms of disease, which under the names of Nervous Debility, Hysteria, Hypochondriasis, Mania, Melancholia, Imbecility, Madness, Epilepsy, and Convulsions of all sorts, of Softening of the Bones (Rachitis), Scoliosis and Cyphosis, Caries, Cancer, Fungus, Hæmatodes, Malignant Organic Growths, Gout, Hæmorrhoids, Jaundice, Cyanosis, Dropsy, Amenorrhœa, Hæmorrhage from the Stomach, Nose, Lungs, Bladder, and Womb, of Asthma, and Ulceration of the Lungs, of Impotency and Barrenness, of Megrin, Deafness, Cataract, Amaurosis, Urinary Calculus, Paralysis, Defects of the Senses, and Pains of thousands of kinds, &c., figure in systematic works on pathology as peculiar independent diseases.”—(P. 184.) Hahne-

actually meant the cure of Itch (that fertile source of human disease and suffering), when he issued "the solemn command to his disciples," "*cleanse the lepers*" (Matt. x. 7, 8); the leprosy of the New Testament and the *psora* or itch of Hahnemann being, according to Mr Everest's own grand discovery, quite identical. Of course, according to this new Hahnemannic theology, all our learned theologians have hitherto been in error in supposing, that the verse in which this phrase occurs ("And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, *cleanse the lepers*, raise the dead, cast out devils") included a warrant of miraculous gifts to the first disciples, for the purpose

mann tried to trace some acute diseases also to *Psora*. "No one (says he) free from *Psora*, ever gets inflammation of the lungs."—*Lesser Writings*, p. 831.

Mr Everest's own fanciful enumeration of the moral, religious, political, and physical results in mankind of the presence of Itch or Leprosy in the human constitution, is perhaps still more extensive and comprehensive than of Hahnemann; and he tells us he could adduce many proofs derived from his (Mr Everest's) own experience, of the truth of Hahnemann's doctrine of the dreadful consequences of the taint of Itch or leprosy. "The taint (says he) is, as Scripture *has* hinted, and investigation *has* within these few years shown, the parent of all, these chronic tendencies, these Cachexias, these Scrofulas, these Atrophies, this Sterility, this Atony, this Gout, this Rheumatism, this Phthisis, this hereditary Insanity with all its hydra heads and multiform shapes and shades, dark Passions, furious Lusts, stubborn Obstinacies, scowling Tempers, suicidal Manias, gloomy Revenges, gnawing Jealousies, Fretfulness, Ill-humour; in short, all the various aberrations of mind, and reluctance to bear patiently the burdens which the Lord lays on man. All these chronic tendencies to disorder do combine and interlace with the natural corruption, the taint derived from Adam; and who, save God alone, shall say where one begins, and the other ends? The tendency to disorder of the functions aggravates the tendency to sin. The chronic taint in the constitution increases the chronic proneness to sin which Adam left us. The physical leprosy of the flesh unites with the moral leprosy of the soul. It is this combination of the two, aided often by stimuli, and almost always by large doses of violent inappropriate medicines antecedently given (medicines which a child may put into the constitution, but which ten men could not get out of it again), which festers in your gaols, rots in your hulks, seethes in your lanes and alleys, and bubbles up in crime, madness, and eccentricity all over your land. This it is which makes your atheist on the one hand, your bigot on the other. This it is which feeds the flame of folly everywhere all over the earth, placed Simon on his pillar, sent the world on crusades, lights the Sutttee :—nay, why travel eastward! which here in this our own land, gave disciples to Johanna Southcote, creates Mormons,—peoples Agapemone, begets holy jackets and bleeding pictures,—and confounds God's reasonable heritage with crime—guilt—lust—passion—disease—distress—lunacy—folly—idiocy."—P. 39 of Mr Everest's *Sermon*.

Surely, among the many wild and strange medical theories that have from time to time been broached and forgotten by enthusiasts, during the last two or three thousand years, none, at least, ever was wilder or stranger than this Hahnemannic creed, regarding itch and its ill consequences.

of their testifying to men the truth of the great mission intrusted to them. Why (argues Mr Everest) was leprosy picked out among the ills of man? "Why not blindness?" He forgets that blindness is enumerated in another parallel passage in evidence of the same divine power of miracle-working on the part of our Saviour himself. "The *blind* receive their sight, the lame walk, the *lepers are cleansed*, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. xi. 5). Maundrell, one of our earliest English travellers in Palestine, when speaking of the leprosy, which he still saw, in the 17th century, lingering among some inhabitants of the Holy Land, describes "the distemper as so noisome that it mighte well passe for the utmost corruption of the human bodie on this side the grave." Its revolting and hopeless character was well known to the Jews from the experience of ages; and Christ, indeed, could not have manifested his own divine power and mission more strongly than by miraculously curing so incurable a malady, and by bestowing the same gift upon his disciples.

"Irreligion (maintains Mr Everest), is the daughter of internal disorder," or disease; but "the old system" of medicine did not properly remove disordered action, and hence "was (to use his own words) of no use or value as an aid to conversion;" whilst he conceives that by appropriate homœopathic treatment, clergymen may expect to obtain great assistance in their spiritual work among their flocks. If the psoric taint were completely eradicated, the consequence, he maintains, would be, that "the holy and saving truths of the Gospel then will be admitted into the heart, and *never* fail, then, to influence the life."¹ Without, in short, stating it in as many words, Mr Everest,—amidst much characteristic verbiage and declamation,—conveys to the minds of his readers the idea that sin, or at least man's persistence in sin, and repulsion of gospel

¹ Hahnemann's experience, however, was not apparently always in consonance with Mr Everest's theory. For, in a note to one of his sections on the effects and cure of *psora*, he thus complains;—"How often do we not meet with a mild, soft disposition in patients who have for years been afflicted with the most painful diseases, so that the physician feels constrained to esteem and compassionate the sufferer! But if he subdue the disease, and restore the patient to health—as is frequently done in homœopathic practice—he is often astonished and horrified at the frightful alteration in his disposition. He often witnesses the occurrence of ingratitude, cruelty, refined malice, and propensities most disgraceful and degrading to humanity, which were exactly the qualities possessed by the patient before he grew ill."—*Hahnemann's Organon*. Fifth Edition. P. 265.

truth, is the result of the innate *physical* deformity or disorder of the human body, rather than the result of the innate *moral* deformity and wickedness of the human heart, or of both combined; but further, this physical disorder—consisting, as it does, merely of *Psora* or Itch and its consequences,—is removable by appropriate medical anti-psoric treatment; and he believes that the reception of Divine truth for conviction and conversion may, and should, be artificially promoted by globulising homœopathically, children and others, not “*when* people are sick, but *before* that,” for thus (again to use his own words) by a “continuous [homœopathic] treatment, begun in childhood, we may hope to anticipate disorders, to restore harmony, to combat the internal *psoric* tendencies, and to procure a patient hearing and kindly reception of spiritual ministrations.” (See *Sermon preached in the Church of St Augustin, Cheapside, April 9th, 1851, by the Rev. Thomas R. Everest*; London, published by Alyott and Jones, booksellers).

I regret to add, that the homœopathic orthodoxy of Mr Everest’s Hahnemannian theology has been so far sanctioned and homologated by his homœopathic brethren in England, that the sermon in question was publicly preached in aid of the funds of the London Hahnemann Hospital; Mr Everest having been nominated for that purpose by, he tells us, the kind partiality of the Hospital Board of Management. The reverend author is himself a Vice-President in the directory of the same hospital; and the fly-leaf of his sermon bears the names of various noblemen, gentlemen, and homœopathic physicians, as office-bearers along with him in the management of the institution which was to reap the pecuniary benefits accruing from the delivery of this medico-theological statement and appeal of his to the “mothers,” the “fathers,” the “religious public,” the “religious body of *this* land,” and the “governors of God’s heritage, monarchs, parliaments, and magistrates.”

A late discovery of Dr Mure may perhaps greatly interest poor Mr Everest, and those who fancy with him that *psora* or itch forms one of the great obstructions to spiritual conversion. Dr Mure announces this discovery (see his *Pathogenesie*, pp. 129 to 141) with, he states, a feeling of sincere satisfaction (le sentiment de satisfaction intime), and a conviction that he renders by it a real service to the practice and theory of medicine. This new and grand specific for *psora*, and especially for *hereditary psora* (the very thing re-

quired), consists of homœopathic doses of a species of animal which, observes Dr Mure, "it is unnecessary to describe at length, the animal being sufficiently known,"—namely, the human louse, "le pou sur la tête des enfans," or "*Pediculus capitis*."¹ Dr Mure found that doses of lice, or lice-tea, were capable of creating 283 different symptoms in the stomach, head, chest, bowels, skin, &c., &c. To the description of these symptoms he devotes twelve pages, and his conclusion is that the effects of this new medicinal homœopathic agent were altogether such as to show it to be a marvellous specific for the removal of *psora*.² May we expect a report from Mr

¹ Doses of another insect had previously been used for the homœopathic treatment of *Psora*. Persons affected with itch have (as is now well known to physicians), a small insect (the *Acarus Scabiei*) imbedded in their diseased skins in the vicinity of the eruptions. These pickings or scrapings of disease from the skins of patients affected with itch, are, it appears, after being triturated with sugar of milk, administered as an internal remedy in that disorder, on the principle *similia similibus curantur*.—(*Pharmaceutical Journal* for 1851, Vol. x. p. 382.) On the same principle Dr Hering, one of the most distinguished American homœopathists, recommends swallowing "bugs in the 30th dilution" for curing the inflammation arising from bug-bites. "The exanthemata should be combated in the same way; cholera patients should swallow the matters they ejected, potentized (or duly prepared); yellow fever patients should be treated in like manner; the scales of scarlatina should be used as a prophylactic against that disease; and typhus patients should have milk sugar laid on their skin to catch the typhus virus, which was to be used as an anti-typhus remedy. Hering called this treatment by *similima*, not *æqualia*; and Hahnemann says the same. (*Chron. Krank.* Vol. i. p. 188)." "Leucorrhœa was cured by potentized leucorrhœal matter," &c., and the expectoration of phthisis given to phthisical patients. See further details of isopathic remedies in a Sketch of the Progressive Development of the Homœopathic System, in the "Journal of Homœopathy" for 1849, p. 337. Drs Tietze, Schnappauf, Rummel, and others, have latterly treated patients labouring under small-pox with doses of the matter of small pox and cow-pox.—(*Ibid.* for 1851, p. 470 and 504.)

² "Avant de commencer cette expérience, nous en attendions des résultats importants. Nous pensions que la nature, en multipliant le Pou sur la tête des enfans, indiquait d'avance un spécifique de la psore héréditaire. Nous savions aussi que le *Psorinum* développait la pityriase chez l'homme sain. Cette coïncidence merveilleuse, cette double démonstration, ne pouvait être trompeuse. Nous avons, en effet, trouvé dans *Pediculus* un agent des plus utiles dans les maladies de l'enfance, et, de plus, un des termes extrêmes de la série symptomatologique que nous avons ébauchée, et que sans lui nous eussions eu, sans doute, beaucoup de peine à formuler. Sous ce double rapport, nous pensons avoir rendu un service réel à la pratique et à la théorie de notre art. Ceux qui se livrent à ces patientes recherches peuvent seuls comprendre le sentiment de satisfaction intime qui accompagne une pareille conviction."—*Doctrines de l'Ecole de Rio*, &c.,—contenant une Exposition Methodique de l'Homœopathie, &c. p. 129. Hahnemann scarcely boasted more strongly of any of his own discoveries, nor

Everest and his clerico-medical followers as to the extent to which they find continuous doses of the *Pediculus* when administered to their flocks an aid to their "spiritual conversion"?

Only think of Dr Wiseman, or Dr Hugh McNeile, Dr Candlish, or Mr Drummond, attempting to render their spiritual ministrations more efficacious to their congregations by asking them, as Mr Everest proposes, to get themselves properly prepared for the reception of gospel truth by due doses of anti-psoric globules!!

Too true, alas! is the trite remark, that, for centuries past, the promoters of almost all varieties of human folly have, by forced explanations of one text or other of the Bible, attempted to defend and justify their own peculiar type of foolishness.

even, for example, when late in life, he declared that he could so far reverse the laws of Nature, that if his directions about the use of camphor, in Malignant Cholera, were followed, "*every* patient (attacked with that disease) would be *infallibly* restored within a couple of hours, as (to continue his own assertion in his own words) the most undeniable facts and instances prove." (See his *Lesser Writings*, p. 854, where the words *every* and *infallibly* are printed thus in italics):—"Be ye sure that he that vaunteth him of his success, is one that ye may trust not; and if he speaketh of doing impossible things, he but deceiveth his own heart, or your ears, and his words become unworthy of your belief."

THE HOMŒOPATHIC LAW "SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURANTUR."

IN medicine and surgery we have many general facts or laws, more or less correctly ascertained and established; and the art of medicine consists in the practical application of these laws to the relief and cure of the diseases of our patients. These laws are, some of a higher, some of a lower, type of generality. As examples of them, we have, for instance, the law, that various contagious diseases, more particularly eruptive fevers, seldom attack the same individual twice during life; and the practical application of this law, in artificial inoculation with small-pox and cow-pox, has already saved millions of human lives. As a general law, cinchona has the power of arresting and curing diseases of an intermittent or periodic type, as intermittent fever or ague, intermittent neuralgia, &c. As a general law, the employment of opium arrests and cures irritative diarrhœa; iron cures chlorosis, &c., &c.

But the law laid down by Hahnemann, and which forms the groundwork of homœopathy,—viz., *similia similibus curantur*, is regarded by him and his disciples, not in the light of a *general* law, but as a *universal* and *infallible* law in therapeutics. This fundamental homœopathic law, as stated by him, amounts to this—that to effect the cure of diseases, we should in every case give "a medicine which can itself produce an affection similar to that sought to be cured."¹ (*Organon*, p. 56). "The truth," he avers, "is *only* to be found in this method." "It is not possible," he states, "to perform a cure but by the aid of a remedy which produces symptoms similar to those of the dis-

¹ I do not stop to inquire into the contradiction implied in this proposition. But "how (asks Dr Wolf) can it be reconciled with common sense, that the vital powers are too weak and insufficient to remove any natural disease, or its symptoms, be they ever so trifling, without the aid of a homœopathic drug, but are, nevertheless, powerful enough to remove the drug-sickness, which is left after the natural disease is extinguished? Can any one comprehend that a power should be capable of overcoming a large obstacle, and should be incapable of removing, at the same time, a similar and comparatively much smaller one?"

ease itself." (P. 73). He holds up this law of *similia similibus curantur*—"like is cured by like"—as "the only therapeutic law conformable to nature," (p. 55);—"the only therapeutic law consonant to nature," (p. 100);—as an "infallible" (p. 73);—an "unerring law," (p. 78);—as "*the great sole* therapeutic law," (p. 153);—as a "mode of cure founded on an eternal, infallible law of nature." (P. 156).

For one, I am most willing to admit that if Hahnemann, or any man, could discover a single, universal, infallible law in therapeutics, applicable to "all diseases and all cases of disease," it would constitute the greatest imaginable discovery in medicine. Many men have in the same way fancied that they have discovered a single infallible *universal* remedy for "all diseases and for all cases of disease." Priessnitz thought that his cold water was such; Morrison averred that his pills were such; and so on. All such exclusive systems and ideas, however (though containing, as most of them do, some germs of truth), have ended in failure; and principally because they have been improperly and indiscreetly held up as *universal* and infallible laws, in the treatment of all diseases. Hahnemann deemed, as we have just seen, the therapeutic law, "Like is cured by like," as a law universal in its character, and universal in its application; but most assuredly he adduced nothing approaching to adequate proof to substantiate his bold hypothesis. The imagined instances, for example, which he gives of it in the introduction to his *Organon*, are almost all of doubtful and imperfectly observed phenomena, and the analogies he draws are often very forced and very inconsequential. They are utterly and totally inadequate to show, that the law is even a *general* one in therapeutics, let alone a *universal infallible* law, or theory of cure, as he declared it to be. For a universal law in medicine, or in other sciences, is a law, of course, that admits of no true exception to its operation; and the individual facts and premises upon which it is primarily built, like the facts to which it subsequently extends, should all stand forth clearly and indubitably in unequivocal support of it.

Such, however, is not the case with the alleged infallible law of homœopathy. It is alleged to be a universal law; while, in fact, the consideration of the *production* of most diseases, and of their means of *cure*, would, I believe, readily convince any unprejudiced mind, that this alleged infallible law has truly no character of infallibility.

It would be a very wearisome and very useless task to show this, in relation to any great number of diseases. Let us consider it in

its bearings upon two or three only, for time and space alike forbid us to allude to more. And for our illustrations, let us take those examples of disease which Sir John Herschel adduces in his "Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy," as instances for which the advancement of science of late years, has devised more or less certain means of removal and cure. These instances were, of course, originally adduced by that author without any view to such a question as the present; and are hence free from the prejudice of selection. Sir John Herschel adduces as his illustrations, the treatment of the following four diseases, viz: the cure of ague or intermittent fever by quinine; the arrestment of the ravages of small-pox by vaccination; the suppression of sea-scurvy in our fleets by lemon-juice, &c.; and the removal of goitres by the use of iodine. These examples are as good as any other, and for the present object the more apposite, inasmuch as the first in our enumeration, formed in Hahnemann's mind, the origin and groundwork on which the doctrine of homœopathy was primarily built; and the second has been adduced by his disciples as the best-marked instance in favour of his doctrine.

Let us turn, first, to the cure of intermittent fever by cinchona bark, or the active principle of that bark, quinine; and consider whether this is, as it is alleged to be, one of the strongest possible proofs in favour of the doctrine of homœopathy.

*First Instance.—Cure of Ague by Quinine or Cinchona Bark.*¹—It was in attempting to explain how cinchona bark cured ague or intermittent fever, that Hahnemann made his alleged discovery. I here quote in foot notes, the description of the supposed discovery, as given,—1st, in a lately-published homœopathic pamphlet, by one who is an earnest follower, and was a personal friend of Hahnemann;² and,

¹ "Quinine, the essential principle in which reside the febrifuge qualities of the Peruvian bark, (is) a discovery by which posterity is yet to benefit in its full extent, but which has already begun to diffuse comparative comfort and health through regions almost desolated by pestiferous exhalations."—*Herschel's Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*, p. 56.

² "The world has been so often informed of the manner in which he began his discoveries, that I presume it has reached even yourself; yet suffer me to refer to it once more; it may not be altogether without profit. Dr Cullen had just published some accounts of the extraordinary cures of various kinds of ague by cinchona. The man whom you despise so much was employed in translating his work into German

2d, in an editorial note, appended to a work edited by Drs Drysdale and Russell, two zealous and distinguished homœopathists.'

The supposed discovery, regarding cinchona, amounted to this, —That cinchona cures intermittent fever in the sick, because cinchona, when taken in ordinary allopathic doses, gives a healthy man an intermittent fever, or symptoms similar to it. "Like cures like." Now, the imagined universal law, 'similia similibus curantur,' was here, as elsewhere, built upon a premise, or supposed observation which itself is *not* a fact. "There are," according to the often-quoted remark of Cullen, "more false facts than even false theories in medicine." It is true, as a general fact, that cinchona cures ague; but it is *not* true that the use of cinchona produces ague. There is every reason to believe that it was owing to the preconceived hypothesis in Hahnemann's own mind, that *he* got ague symptoms from it. In Britain, for example, I am not aware that such a result has been

for the booksellers, for having given up a profession which he could not conscientiously practise, he was very poor; and his thoughts one day fell on the subjects he had been reading. He thought, 'Why does this substance cure these maladies?' Alas! he could get no answer to the question; all was as dark before him as it must be to you, sir, at present. The question was dismissed from his mind, but in vain; it returned with renewed force. He procured some of the substance in question. He examined it, tasted it, weighed it; but there was still no answer. 'The depth said, it is not in me to say; and the sea said, it is not in me.' He took his hat, wandered forth alone, and meditated on the subject alone for hours, and all in vain. At length he thought, 'A certain quantity of this inert-looking powder will make a man strong who is attacked with a certain sort of weakness, and arrest his periodical shivering and concomitant sufferings; will it make me stronger, I wonder, if I take it?' He began a course of it, and one evening, after having taken a quantity of it for several successive days, he was attacked with shivering and other symptoms of intermittent fever, attended with much weakness and loss of appetite. He stopped his daily doses; his fever went away, and health returned. He tried it many times, and invariably with the same or similar results. Now, observe, if you please, 'FACT THE FIRST.' Cinchona gives a healthy man an intermittent fever, and cinchona cures intermittent fever in the sick."—(*Mr Everest's Letter to Dr Cormack*, 1851).

¹ "It was in the year 1790, while he was engaged in translating Cullen's *Materia Medica*, that the theoretic explanation of the anti-febrile principle in cinchona was suggested to him, on which he resolved to establish by experiment whereon rests its power to cure intermittent fever. After having previously found that strong coffee, pepper, wolfsbane, St Ignatius' bean, and arsenic, have the property of exciting a kind of fever, he conjectured that a substance can serve as a remedy only by producing symptoms which resemble and correspond with those which the disease exhibits. Accordingly he made the first trial on himself, by taking for some days four scruples of powdered cinchona twice a-day, and observed the symptoms which mark a well-developed intermittent fever."—*Fletcher's Pathology*, edited by Drs Drysdale and Russell, p. 494.

observed by any physicians or any patients. And yet there is scarcely a British medical practitioner who has not exhibited cinchona or quinine to his patients hundreds of times. Among our population many thousands of individuals have taken the cinchona, or its concentrated principle, quinine, and the alleged result—viz., the production of ague,—has many thousands of times failed. Indeed, most of the individuals in these Islands who have been repeatedly sick (and who has not?), have taken at one time or another, doses of cinchona or quinine as a tonic or otherwise. Has one of them ever had ague, or a disease like ague, produced by the use of this drug? Perhaps it may occur to some minds as an objection to such an argument, that the cinchona and quinine did not lead to this effect—the production of ague,—because the individuals taking it might not be perfectly healthy at the time of taking it. But Hahnemann himself admits, “that the provings or effects of medicine may be seen by watching the actions of them when given to the sick, particularly in chronic diseases, and even when given in doses as small as the 30th dilution.” Besides, many people have taken continuous doses of quinine to acquire increased tone and strength, even after they were in a state of comparative good health; and not a few now of our officers and others serving on the coast of Africa, and in India, have (as was first, I believe, recommended by Dr Copeland) taken long courses of quinine without observing ague to follow its use.

Let me repeat it, that it is an undoubted general fact or therapeutic law, that the use of cinchona or quinine *cures* ague; but, observation roundly and entirely contradicts the allegation of Hahnemann, that its use can also *produce* ague. And yet this last allegation was necessary in order that the law of “*similia similibus curantur*” be true. If the allegation however is untrue, as it certainly is, then this supposed infallible universal law, is not infallible and universal; and in this as in other instances, is not founded upon fact. Nor would it be at all relevant and logical to maintain, that if cinchona or quinine did *produce* ague (which is altogether questionable and doubtful), in ten or twenty exceptional instances out of the thousands or millions of people who have taken it, that *exceptional* observation would be sufficient. A universal infallible law, like the “*similia similibus*,” can admit of no such rare exceptions, either in the premises upon which it is built, or in the result which it comprehends. Far less can it be built upon a few rare and *exceptional* observations as its deliberate data or premises. A philosopher might as well try

to build an universal law of repulsion of matter (in opposition to Newton's universal law of its attraction or gravitation), by adducing in favour of this alleged "infallible," "unerring," universal law of repulsion, the apparently *exceptional* case of the *ascent* of the balloon, in opposition to the constant observation of the *descent* of the apple and of other material bodies to the earth. The premises upon which an universal law is built must be constant, and not exceptional, phenomena. "Every real medicine," says Hahnemann himself (and if any medicine deserves that name, certainly cinchona or quinine merits it), "every real medicine acts at *all* times, and under *all* circumstances, on every living human being, and produces in him the symptoms peculiar to it, distinctly perceptible if the dose be large enough, so that evidently every living human organism is liable to be affected, and, as it were, inoculated, with the medicinal disease at any time, and absolutely unconditionally." (*Organon* xxxi., p. 132.) When judged by this criterion of Hahnemann, there can be but one conclusion,—viz., that cinchona does *not* produce ague or a disease analogous to ague; and that in relation to it, the "infallible," "unerring" law of *similia similibus* does not hold good.

Nay more, I believe we may go one step further in relation to the action of cinchona or quinine. No one can doubt, that as a general law, the large doses of cinchona, or the corresponding doses of quinine, given by physicians, arrest and cure ague. Rest and a change of diet, and habitation, will often alone cure the milder cases of the disease.¹ But there are few if any things in the general laws

¹ As evidence of this fact, and of the great care required in drawing correct deductions from therapeutic observations, let me quote the following statement from Professor Chomel of Paris:—"The Common Holly having been much praised as a remedy for intermittent fever, M. Chomel determined to make trial of it in the clinical wards of the Hospital La Charité. Accordingly, he requested the officers of the Bureau Central, an establishment where nearly all the patients are admitted in the Parisian Hospitals, to send him some cases of that disease. *Twenty-two* cases were, in consequence, directed to him. After their admission, he purposely abstained from all treatment for several days, in order to assure himself of the correctness of the diagnosis, and to ascertain that the paroxysms were neither suspended nor diminished by the altered circumstances of the patients. He found, that of the twenty-two, *seven* never had another paroxysm, *four* had paroxysms of decreasing intensity, and *eight* had nothing but symptomatic paroxysms, connected with slight inflammation of the mucous membranes, which yielded to simple antiphlogistic remedies; *three* only were fit subjects for experiment, *i. e.* had essential intermittent fever, preserving all its intensity in the three or four paroxysms following their admission. The remedy (the Holly) was given to these at first in the dose recommended; the quantity

of therapeutics more certain, than the removal of all *curable* cases of ague by the use of cinchona or quinine, given in the ordinary doses and by ordinary physicians. In Vienna, however, and elsewhere, where the disease is prevalent, the infinitesimal doses of cinchona or quinine recommended by Hahnemann, as a necessary off-shoot of his doctrine of “*similia similibus*,” are not found to cure ague like the large ordinary doses of the same drug. “In corroboration, we might (observes Dr Balfour) quote the confessions of the homœopaths themselves, or of those who have been reconverted to allopathy. Thus Koff states, that this disease can neither be certainly, quickly, nor pleasantly cured by the infinitesimals. Nay, he (Koff) quotes avowed homœopaths, Gross, Rummel, Œgidi, and Hauptmann, to the same effect.” “What (asks Dr Balfour) are we to think of a system, whose very foundation-stone is so unstable? For, as is well known, it was the action of cinchona that first led Hahnemann to think of his new theory.”¹

Second instance.—Vaccination and its Effects upon Small-pox.—The second instance adduced by Sir John Herschel of the power of medicine over human maladies, is the suppression of small-pox by Dr Jenner’s discovery of vaccination. Certainly it would be impossible to adduce a more striking instance of the triumph of medicine over the ravages of disease; for, if small-pox prevailed now as much in Britain amongst our present increased population, as it prevailed among the smaller population of the last century, and before vaccination was discovered, about 80,000 individuals would die from it annually in England and Scotland alone; and, as I have already stated in a preceding page, this single discovery in medicine, has probably already saved millions of human lives.

Hahnemann and his followers allege, that the prevention of small-pox by vaccination is a striking instance of the operation of the in-

was then doubled, quadrupled, and octupled, without any appreciable effect. The sulphate of quinine was then given in the ordinary way, and the paroxysms were *immediately* stopped. If, from the day of admission, the remedy had been given to all, or even only to those who had essential intermittent fever, we would have concluded, that it had cured nineteen out of twenty-two, or, at least, eleven in fourteen, and would have regarded the remaining three cases—the only ones proper to test the remedy—as exceptional ones.”—See the *Lancet* for 1841-2, p. 107.

¹ *British and Foreign Medical Review*, vol. xxiii., p. 608.

fallible law of homœopathy.¹ But most assuredly it is not an instance in the slightest degree in favour of that law.

In order to cure a disease, we should, according to Hahnemann, by means of a similar affection developed by a homœopathically chosen remedy, excite in the body, an artificial or “medicinal disease somewhat *greater* in degree” than the natural disease which we wish to remove. (*Organon*, p. 41.) The physician, he elsewhere observes, “affects the vital force in a stronger manner by a potency that produces a disease very similar, but *stronger*.” (P. 128.) When, however, we use as a preventive of small-pox, artificial inoculation with small-pox (variolation), or artificial inoculation with cow-pox (vaccination), the artificial disease is not, what is hypothetically required by the homœopathic law, a *greater* or *stronger* disease than the small-pox itself. Besides, when small-pox inoculation was used, as was generally done in the last century, to prevent small-pox, the remedy thus employed did not produce symptoms merely *similar* to small-pox, but symptoms *identical* with it. In fact, the two diseases were identical and the same. And the effect, if explicable in this way, was not an effect of the homœopathic law *similia similibus*,—of like cured by like; but rather of the isopathic law of Lux,—viz., of the same disease cured by the same, *æqualia æqualibus curantur*.² And the same remark may be extended to the present practice of vaccination, seeing that almost all pathologists are now agreed, that small-pox and cow-pox are identically the same disease, with this difference, that the cow-pox has been modified by passing through the body of the cow, but can be reproduced again in the cow by exposing it fully to the contagion of human small-pox.

In truth, however, the prevention of small-pox by artificial variolation and vaccination, depends altogether on a different law, from

¹ “This (vaccination) is an operation purely homœopathic, and one which, from its efficacy in the prevention of a disease exhibiting analogous symptoms, has been frequently quoted by our Great Founder and his disciples, as one of the best illustrations of the immutable law,” &c.—*Dr Laurie's Homœopathic Domestic Medicine*, p. 728.

² Hahnemann himself more than once distinctly lays it down, that (to quote his own words), “the homœopathic doctrine *never* pretended to cure a disease by the *same*, the *identical* power by which the disease was produced; but by means of a medicine that possesses the peculiar power of being able to produce a *similar* morbid state.”—(See his *Lesser Writings*, p. 743.) “If (he again remarks) the two were not merely of a *similar* but of the *same* nature, consequently identical, then no result, or only an aggravation of the malady, would follow.”—*Ibid*, p. 708.

that of *similia similibus* or *æqualia æqualibus*. And the law is one which the public, as well as the profession, have long been intimate with. It is simply this,—that one attack of certain specific contagious diseases, as measles, scarlet fever, hooping-cough, plague, &c., generally destroys, for the remainder of life, the liability in the individual attacked, to a repetition of the same disease. When a child is attacked, for example, with measles, it is rarely, in after-life, attacked with the same affection a second time. This result, however, is, I repeat, most assuredly no instance of the homœopathic law, that like is cured by like. Neither on the same ground is the prevention of small-pox by variolation or vaccination, any example of the operation of that law.

Third instance.—Prevention and Cure of Sea-Scurvy by Lemon-juice.—The third illustration adduced by Sir John Herschel, is the prevention and cure of sea-scurvy by lemon-juice, &c. In speaking of the former ravages produced in our fleets by sea-scurvy, as compared with the present state of our navy, Sir John Herschel remarks:—

“Hardly inferior to this scourge (of small-pox) on land was, within the last seventy or eighty years, the scurvy at sea. The sufferings and destruction produced by this horrid disorder on board our ships, when, as a matter of course, it broke out after a few months’ voyage, seem now almost incredible. Deaths, to the amount of eight or ten a day, in a moderate ship’s company; bodies sewn up in hammocks, and washing about the decks for the want of strength and spirits on the part of the miserable survivors to cast them overboard; and every form of loathsome and excruciating misery of which the human frame is susceptible:—such are the pictures which the narratives of nautical adventure in those days continually offer. . . . So tremendous were the ravages of scurvy, that in the year 1726, Admiral Hosier sailed with seven ships of the line to the West Indies, and buried his ships’ companies twice, and died himself, in consequence, of a broken heart. . . . In 1780, the number of cases of scurvy received into Haslar Hospital was 1457; in 1806, *one* only; and, in 1807, *one*. There are now many surgeons in the navy who have never seen the disease.”¹

Few facts are better ascertained and more universally acknow-

¹ Herschel’s Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy, p. 52.

ledged than this,—that lemon-juice, and the use of fresh succulent fruits and vegetables, form not only the best preventives, but also the best and most certain cures for sea-scurvy. No man, I believe, has any doubt that the use of lemon-juice, or the use of fresh salads or fruits, would cure any common uncomplicated case of scurvy.¹ But no man, so far as I know, has ever observed the use of lemon-juice produce the disease which it can thus cure; though it ought to do so often and constantly, if the homœopathic law were a true, “unerring, infallible” law, as Hahnemann and his followers aver it to be.²

But again, while the use of fresh and succulent vegetables, such as salads, fruits, &c., will almost infallibly *cure* any common case of scurvy, certainly the daily use of salads or fruits by the general community does not *produce* in them that disease, or any morbid affection or state similar to that disease; and yet, I repeat, it ought to do so, if there were any truth in what Hahnemann terms his “infallible, eternal law of nature.”

Fourth instance.—Cure of Goitre by the exhibition of Iodine.—The last instance mentioned by Sir John Herschel is the use of iodine in discussing and removing goitre from the neck or thyroid gland. “The result,” says he, “establishes the extraordinary fact, that this singular substance, taken as a medicine, acts with the utmost promptitude and energy on *goitre*, dissipating the largest and most inveterate in a short time, and acting (of course like all medicines, even the most approved, with occasional failures) as a specific, or natural antagonist, against that odious deformity.”³ In consonance with the unerring law of homœopathy, this drug, which thus

¹ “Scurvy is infallibly and rapidly cured by the administration of lemon-juice, or of other fresh fruits and vegetables.”—Dr Watson’s *Lectures on the Practice of Physic* (1848). Vol. ii. p. 860.

² I am aware, that on theoretical grounds Dr Stevens supposes that the use of lemon-juice should produce scurvy; but I believe that neither he nor any one else ever observed that disease to result *from* the use of lemon-juice. Occasionally scurvy may have been seen in sailors who had been using the lemon-juice, but in such instances the deficient quantity or quality of the lemon-juice was the cause; just as small-pox will occasionally occur after vaccination, from the vaccination being defective or imperfect; but in such circumstances the vaccination is not the *cause* of the small-pox, nor the lemon-juice the *cause* of the scurvy.

³ Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy, p. 51.

removes goitrous swelling of the neck, ought also to produce an affection similar to goitre in the neck or thyroid gland. But though preparations of iodine are used most extensively in medical practice for other diseases, no one, I believe, has ever seen the drug produce this affection, or an affection similar to it, in the neck or thyroid gland; which it ought constantly to do, under these circumstances, if there were truth in the homœopathic law.

The preceding instances, and they might easily be multiplied if necessary, are perhaps sufficient to show, that the alleged *universal* law of *similia similibus*, is by no means infallible and universal, as it was and is maintained to be by Hahnemann and his supporters. Hahnemann has himself shown, by quotations from various authors, that the law of *similia similibus curantur* was, from time to time, suggested by practitioners and writers before his day, as one of the *general* laws of therapeutics. I have said enough, I believe, to show that it is not a *universal* law; and I think it is even doubtful if it is one of the *general* laws of therapeutics. It would be a valuable general law, if it could be proved to be such; but evidence is wanting even to that effect. No doubt we find that a drug, such as a solution of nitrate of silver, when dropped into the eye, will produce a form of inflammation of the eye, and that a similar solution is, in conjunction with other appropriate remedial means, frequently used by oculists for the cure of catarrhal and other inflammatory affections in that organ. But all adequate proof is wanting, capable of showing that the mere curative effect, which the medicine possesses over the inflammation, has *any connection whatever* with its morbid power of producing the inflammation; or the reverse. In other words, we have no evidence that the drug has the power of curing, merely because it has the power of producing, inflammatory disease of the eye. There is no proved relation of cause and effect, between these two coincidences. In none of the cases of *similia similibus* adduced by homœopaths, is the sequence of production and cure a constant sequence; it is always an exceptional, and often a rare, coincidence only; but even the constancy of the sequence or coincidence, even were it well marked, would not necessarily prove the connection between the phenomena to be of the relation of cause and effect. "Night follows day, and day follows night; but night is not the cause of day, nor day the cause of night."

To show this want of causal relation in the alleged cases of *similia*

similibus, let us take another instance in illustration. Hahnemann, and other homœopathists, often adduce, in supposed corroboration of the truth of the principle, *similia similibus curantur*, the fact, that in "recent cases of frost-bitten limbs, frozen sour-cROUT is applied, and frictions of snow are used."—(*Organon*, p. 100.) In this instance, the good effect derived from the frequent frictions of snow, is not truly explicable on the principle that "like cures like," but is explicable on other acknowledged therapeutic principles. The frictions with the snow do not cure the frost-bite in consequence of the fact of an excessive cold having originally produced the frost-bite, as the law of *similia similibus* presupposes. There are not two kinds of cold. Cold as a medicine applied to a frost-bitten part, would not, consequently, be the application of a *like* remedy, but of an agent identically the *same* as the morbid cause. The homœopathic law, as explained by Hahnemann, maintains that the *like medicinal agent* must, as we have already seen, be *stronger* in degree than the *original disease*. But the degree of cold of snow-frictions is not greater than the degree of cold in a frost-bitten part. Parts of a healthy human body are seldom frost-bitten, till the temperature in them is reduced twenty or thirty degrees below the freezing point,—say, for the sake of argument, to zero in Fahrenheit's scale. A quantity of snow held in the human hand, and applied to the frost-bitten part, rapidly acquires a heat of 32° or above it, for it rapidly melts in the hand. Hence the medicinal cold thus applied, is not, I repeat (as the homœopathic law considers necessary), "greater" than the original amount of cold or disease in the frost-bitten part. But, in fact, the true explanation is quite a different one from the law of *similia similibus curantur*. It is a general fact or law, that when extreme degrees of cold or heat are applied to the exposed parts of the human body, the subsequent deleterious effect is greatly modified according to the degree of rapidity, or slowness, with which the part is allowed to return to the natural temperature of the body. If the frost-bitten part at the temperature of zero, were suddenly exposed to the temperature of a room at 60° Fahrenheit, the part would, in consequence of the re-action produced, inflame, and perhaps slough and die. But when it is allowed only gradually to return to the natural temperature of the body, or the natural temperature of the room, by the *intermediate* degree of heat conveyed by snow-frictions being applied to it, this mischance is in a great degree obviated. In this case we see, that the explanation of the good effects of the snow-friction, on

the frost-bitten part, is not referable to the apparent *coincidence* of like curing like, but is referable to a different law. And, in truth, the coincidence itself of *similia similibus*, is here, as in other cases, apparent only, and not real,—a temperature of 32° , such as produced by the snow-frictions, being to the frost-bitten part at zero comparatively an application of *heat*, and not of cold; and the instance itself is merely an example of the common fact, that the apparent coincidence of *similia similibus* is in this as in other instances referable to other acknowledged therapeutic laws.

As a foundation for the application of the universal law, “Like cures like,” in practice, Hahnemann and others have themselves, as is well known, taken doses of different medicines, and marked all the symptoms which they could observe in their own bodies and minds for some days or weeks after swallowing them, hoping by the knowledge thus acquired to be able afterwards in practice to select their medicines according to the principle of similitude. In writing down records of these supposed symptoms, produced by the drugs taken, they doubtlessly often, or indeed generally, noted merely those mental nervous and bodily symptoms which constantly occur in the human body without the use of drugs;¹ and

¹ Take for example, as evidence of this, the symptoms which two well known substances are averred by the homœopaths to produce when swallowed, in order to prove their effects, viz. cayenne pepper and common house-salt.

Cayenne Pepper, according to JAHN, who writes the best known book on homœopathic drugs, produces 142 physiological symptoms in the human economy, “of which (says Dr Wood) the following may serve as a specimen:—‘Pains, with stiffness of the joints’—‘Cramps in the body’—‘Disposition to be frightened’—‘Strong disposition to take everything in bad part, to fly into a rage even on account of pleasantries, and to utter reproaches’—‘Want of reflection and awkwardness’—‘Disposition to jest, and utter witticisms’—‘Bewilderment of the head’—‘Intoxication, as if from spirituous liquors’—‘Loss of memory’—‘Sight entirely extinct, as if from amaurosis (palsy of the eye-nerve)’—‘Painful swelling behind the ear’—‘Epistaxis’—‘Burning pain in the stomach and epigastrium, especially after taking a meal’—‘Aqueous and insipid taste’—‘Flatulent colic’—‘Cough after taking coffee’—‘Dysentery’—‘Oppressed respiration’—‘Shooting in the chest’—‘Pain in the roots of the hair after scratching,’” &c., &c.

Common Salt produces a variety of symptoms, such as—“Palsies”—“Swelling of the glands”—“Nocturnal pains, suspending the respiration, and producing a sort of semilateral palsy”—“Great wasting of the body”—“Eruptions on the skin, with lancinating pain”—“Continual shivering”—“Violent pain in the head”—“Yellow colour of the skin”—“Typhoid fever, with weakness, dryness of the tongue, with great thirst”—“Melancholy sadness, with abundant weeping”—“Hatred of those from whom injuries have long ago been received”—“Irascibility,

more especially occur, if we have our attention set in watch for the presence and discovery of them. No doubt the desire and expectation of these symptoms will conjure up their occurrence. Hahnemann in all probability took symptoms of ague when he first experimentally used the cinchona bark, because he expected, if not actually desired, these symptoms to occur. Many of the "provings" of drugs were made by Hahnemann himself; and his countryman, Isensee, avers that Hahnemann's alleged symptoms "may all be referred to sobriety, fasting, ill-humour, and sleepiness, caused by continued attention to—*nothing*, mixed with those innumerable sensations which crowd every hour of our life."

In these experiments or "provings," as they are termed, upon drugs, the immense number of the symptoms stated to be produced in the human body by one drug, is proof itself that the medicament was not the cause of these symptoms. For instance, 1090 symptoms are recorded as the effects of some doses of oyster-shell; 1242 as the effects of the ink of the cuttle fish; 930 distinct symptoms are recorded as produced by doses of common charcoal,¹ a substance

and violent rages easily provoked"—"Desire to laugh"—"Weakness of the memory, and excessive forgetfulness, the experimenter blunders in speaking and writing"—"Vertigo, heating pains in the head, with stupefaction"—"Inflammation of the eyes"—"Near sightedness"—"Squinting, partial blindness" (Hemipopia)—"Discharge of matter from the ears"—"Inflammation and swelling of the nose"—"Excoriation in the inside of the nose"—"Yellowness of the face"—"Ulceration of the chin"—"Swelling of the submaxillary glands"—"Putrid inflammation of the gums"—"Spasm of the throat"—"Inflammation of the throat"—"Loss of appetite, especially for bread, and repugnance for tobacco smoke"—"Acid eructations, nausea, vomiting, and cramp in the stomach"—"Constipation, colic, and bloody flux"—"Cough, with bloody expectoration"—"Difficulty of breathing, with pulsation of the heart"—"Paralytic weakness, and weight of the arms"—"Warts upon the palms of the hands"—"Burning of the feet," &c., &c.

¹ Flakes of carbon are constantly floating in every room and laboratory, and must almost inevitably be commixed and "potentised" in the trituration of every homœopathic drug. Every mortar used in their long and laborious triturations, necessarily yields also some of its particles under the frictions to which it is subjected. Silix, the principal component of most mortars, is thus also, by a physical necessity, mixed up with the preparing medicine, but is itself, at the same time, a medicine which, in its infinitesimal billionths and decillionths, is capable, according to the homœopathic Materia Medica, of creating many hundred more or less formidable symptoms. In most mortars, even those of agate, alum, &c., is generally also present, and becomes mixed, and by trituration "potentised," with the drug in preparation. These sources must—at least if Hahnemann's own ideas be true—pervert or cancel, to a greater or less degree, the therapeutic effects of every homœopathic drug and globule

which is quite insoluble and inert in doses of drachms, but which Hahnemann alleges he *makes* medicinal by trituration and attenuation. And the specific effects of the various drugs upon the constitution, are averred to last for long periods. Charcoal, colocynth, and alum produce symptoms for 40 days; and Jahr describes, indeed, above 50 drugs, the effects of which continue for a month or longer, the alleged effects during that time being, as might well be expected, very contradictory. Thus belladonna, hemp, &c., &c., have each entered under its effects the power of producing diarrhœa and the power of producing constipation; cantharis produces both drowsiness and sleeplessness; "paleness" and "redness" of the face are both effects of quina; &c., &c.¹ This superabundance of symptoms, under almost every "proved" medicine, has one result,—viz., that when any one drug produces (as they allege many can do), 200, 500, or 1000 symptoms, it is easy (by a piece of self-deceiving casuistry on the part of those who favour homœopathy) to allege that they can find the *counterpart* symptoms or *similia* of almost every disease, in any remedy which is known, by the experience of ordinary physicians, to be useful in the treatment of that disease. For instance, if oyster-shell were a cure for 40 or 50 diseases, could they not easily find the principal counterpart symptoms or *similia* of these 40 or 50 diseases among the alleged 1090 effects or symptoms which the "provings" of this drug are said by them to have produced?

I doubt if all the known symptoms of all diseases, as laid down in our works of Symptomatology, amount to above a thousand in all; and the so-called "proved" effects of many of the drugs used by the homœopathists, could easily be so arranged as to mimic more or less completely most diseases of the human frame. In all this,

used in billionths, deecillionths, &c., prepared and potentised by long triturations, and must consequently give a therapeutic result different from the result obtained by the mere "proving" of the true and simple drug itself—these "provings" having been generally made on large allopathic doses of the same, not commixed with "potentised" doses of silex, &c. The commixture in question, also, of course, directly and flatly interferes in all cases with Hahnemann's great dogma, never to "administer more than *one single simple* medicine at one time."—(*Organon*, p. 319.) To use his own expression, "a compound could never make a *simple*—in all eternity, never."—(*Lesser Writings*, p. 834.) Yet, if he followed his own rules of trituration, he never perhaps used a globule that was not thus a compound.

¹ See Jahr's "Manual of Homœopathic Medicines" (London, 1847), under these different heads.

however, homœopathic practitioners pursue a system of similitudes which are far more imaginary than real, and which are calculated, by a spurious mode of reasoning only, to satisfy themselves of the existence of the fancied similitude of the effects of the drug used, to the disease against which it is used.

Sometimes they appear to sustain the universality and infallibility of the law "*similia similibus*," by another, and still more improper, mode of reasoning. The use of iodine is acknowledged, as we have already stated, to *cure* the enlargement of the thyroid gland, known under the name of goitre; but iodine, when taken by a person in health, has never been observed to produce enlargement of that gland, or any symptoms analogous to it. Yet the homœopaths, in order to keep up this alleged universality of their immutable law of "*similia similibus*," are obliged,¹ in contradiction to every rule in logic and philosophy, to enter in their *Materia Medica*, this action of iodine as one of the symptoms produced by iodine, though goitre was never, I believe, observed as a symptom of the use of iodine, when employed, either upon the healthy body, or upon diseased subjects for other affections.

Further, in support of the universality of the law, "*similia similibus*," homœopathists resort, as a proof of it, to the results of medical private and hospital practice, as observed when medicines are employed on the homœopathic principle. But in answer to any belief in the truth of these results of so-called medical experience, there is one apparently insurmountable objection derivable from their own facts. Some homœopathists, as Schmid and others, use the homœopathic drugs in what is termed their 1st, 2d, or 3d dilutions; others, as Hahnemann, in their 10th, 20th, or 30th dilutions, and, as we have already seen, even higher; but they further aver, that in the same diseases they get the *same* results, whether the drug is used in its 1st or 3d, or in its 20th or 30th dilutions. There is, however, a vast and tremendous difference between the same drug when used in its 1st, 2d, or 3d dilution, and when used in its 20th or 30th. To show this, let us remark that homœopaths use their drugs in three forms—in tinctures, in powders, and globules. Let us take the last to exemplify our remark. The globules used by ho-

¹ See Dr Black on the Sources of the Homœopathic *Materia Medica*, in his "*Principles*," p. 64.

mœopathis consist of two ingredients, viz., sugar (sugar of milk) and a medicinal substance; and they are usually made up in small pellets, about the size of poppy seeds. The smallest, first, or lowest, of the dilutions used by homœopathists, contains 99 grains of sugar to 1 grain of medicine. This mass, filling about an ordinary-sized teaspoon, would yield a very large number of duly medicated globules. Supposing the 1 grain of medicine added, to be sulphur; these globules of sulphur would, according to the doctrines of Hahnemann, infallibly cure many chronic, cutaneous, and other ailments. But the same dose of sulphur would cure infallibly and certainly the same ailments, according to the experience of other homœopathists, if attenuated to the 10th or to the 30th degree. To make, however, the 10th dilution or attenuation of the one grain of sulphur, a quantity of sugar in proportion greater than the bulk of Ben-Nevis would be requisite; and to make only the 20th attenuation (not to go up as high as the 30th or 60th), a quantity of sugar in proportion greater than the whole volume of the Earth itself would be necessary. In other words, globules taken from a mass composed of a grain of sulphur, if duly triturated and mixed through a quantity of sugar equal to the size of the Earth or the size of Ben-Nevis, would have the *same* therapeutical effect and healing power, as globules taken from a mass of a grain of sulphur duly triturated, and mixed with only a small teaspoonful of sugar.

When such contradictory results are gravely and solemnly alleged, can we in common reason give any credit to the results at all? The mechanical amount of muscular movement in a fly, as compared with the mechanical amount of power in a locomotive engine, referred to in a previous page (p. 9), is not greater, nor, in fact, nearly so great, as the disproportion of sulphur and other drugs used by the homœopathists in making globules respectively of their 3d and 30th dilutions.

Homœopathists constantly tell us, that, setting aside all preconceived opinions, we ought to give a trial to their system, and we would be convinced by the results of experience. The same argument has always been used by all the abettors of every exclusive system of treatment—by hydropathists, hygeists, &c., &c. Seeing, as we have in the last paragraph, that the different schools of homœopathists—those that use the high, and those that use the low dilutions, and who consequently employ means that are certainly not identical, yet

affect to get the same identical result—ordinary physicians might well excuse themselves from making any trials, additional to those the homœopathists have themselves made and published. Such trials, however, might have been made to a greater extent than they have been. But we are not, either, so entirely without their evidence as homœopathists assert; and conducted, too, under the eye of some of the best medical observers. Dr Marsden, a homœopathist, speaks of Professor Andral of Paris as termed “the prince of physicians, from his talents, observations, and practical studies.” All gladly acknowledge him to be one of the most conscientious, honest, and able of medical observers. Some years ago M. Andral, calmly, for a time, put homœopathy to the criterion of experience in one of the Parisian hospitals, when its claims were brought before the French Academy of Medicine. “Homœopathia (says Dr Pereira) has been fairly put to the test of experiment by some of the members of the *Académie de Médecine*, and the result was a failure. Andral tried it on 130 or 140 patients, in the presence of the homœopathists themselves, adopting every requisite care and precaution, yet in not one instance was he successful.”¹—(*Materia Medica*, vol. i., p. 144.) Other public experiments have been made in Russia, Naples, &c. (See Lee on Homœopathy, pp. 9, 10.)

Within the last few days, I have received a letter from an eminent London physician, one whom, I believe, the homœopathists themselves would acknowledge to be a most accurate observer and

¹ “M. Andral said, he was decidedly opposed to the project of allowing the homœopaths a dispensary: humanity should not be trifled with by the experiments of these people. He had given their system a fair trial; he had treated above 130 or 140 patients homœopathically, in presence of the Hahnemannians themselves. M. Guibourt had prepared the medicines; and every requisite care and precaution were duly observed: yet in not one instance was he successful. He had tried various experiments on his own person, and several other professional friends had followed his example, in order to ascertain the actual effects of the homœopathic doses; but the results were not as Hahnemann and his disciples described them. He (M. Andral) had taken quinine in the prescribed globules, but had contracted no intermittent fever; he had taken aconite, but without being affected with symptoms of plethora; sulphur he took, to try if he should catch the itch, but he caught nothing; neither, upon swallowing certain globules of arnica, did he feel pains as if he had suffered contusion: and so with various other substances which he and his friends took in obedience to the Hahnemannian precepts. With respect to the attempt to cure disease by this method, he said that in every instance he was obliged to return to allopathy, inasmuch as under the homœopathic treatment the symptoms went on from bad to worse.”—From *Speech* at the *Académie de Médecine*, reported in *London Medical Gazette*, vol. xv., p. 922.

reasoner, and a man of the most disinterested candour. He for some time watched and studied, in the London Homœopathic Hospital itself, the evidence to be gained for or against homœopathy, in the results of the treatment of the sick under the Hahnemannian doctors attached to that institution, and his conclusion, he writes me, is this—"Every thing in it, and out of it, fully confirms the view, that, as to *practice*, homœopathy is truly a nonentity; it is *literally*, as your author Huc says [see foot-note, p. 8], the swallowing of names only."

Many a lady Hahnemannian practitioner has, however, I have no doubt, her own infallible homœopathic experience to adduce in contradiction to that of these physicians. But let her listen for a moment to what homœopathic medical practitioners themselves think of her so-called homœopathic experience. When, some time ago, alluding to amateur lady and gentleman Hahnemannian doctors, Dr Madden of Brighton, a distinguished homœopathist, thus spoke of their credulity and their cures:—"Their credulity! oh! the wonders which they heard of daily, as effected by amateur practitioners (of homœopathy); and what *were* these in the vast majority of cases? Simply *natural recoveries*, in which the all-potent globules took no share. Such boasting (observed Dr Madden) did infinite injury; it might for a time convince the public, but the profession saw through the flimsy triumphs, and at once concluded that all their cures belonged to the same class."¹

And we have (as I conscientiously believe) the most certain, and sure, and ample reasons for extending Dr Madden's observation, in its fullest force and significance ("boasting" and "credulity"² in-

¹ See *Speech of Dr Madden*, after a dinner of the British Homœopathic Society, in the *British Journal of Homœopathy*, vol. v. p. 545.

² Witness, for example, the late striking "credulity" of various homœopathic physicians regarding the now-admitted delusion of the so-called magnetoscope, at Brighton. Mr Rutter of Brighton, invented an instrument on the principle of the old divining ring and rod, which he thought capable of showing wonderful things in animal physiology; and which Dr Quin, Dr Madden, and others, believed capable of demonstrating the influence of infinitesimal doses, as billionths, decillionths, &c., of various drugs, when taken into the human stomach, or acting upon the living organism. "This instrument is so subtle," says Dr Quin, the principal London homœopathic physician, "and the demonstration so clear, whilst the experiments are at the same time so delicate and exact, the same cause repeated invariably producing the same effect, that no one can resist the positive evidence of the undeviating action of this scientific and truly philosophical instrument." "I feel confident," he again states,

cluded), from the whole tribe of homœopathic *amateur* practitioners, to their brethren, the homœopathic *medical* practitioners.¹

At the same time, in relation to the question of homœopathy and infinitesimal doses, as actually applied in *practice*, no one conversant with disease can shut his eyes to the dangers of the system, in the way of omission, if not of commission,—dangers which were lately stated in the following forcible terms by Dr Williams, a gentleman acknowledged on all hands to be standing in the foremost rank of the London physicians of the present day:—"You see (says Dr Williams) all sorts of quackery, with homœopathy foremost, rampant

"that you will agree with me, that science has made a gigantic stride by the philosophical instrument and important discovery of Mr Rutter ; and that homœopathic practitioners especially, are greatly indebted to him for having *proved* the physical action of our remedies in infinitesimal quantities upon the human body ; and that you will join with me heartily in doing honour to him for the great impetus he will be the means of giving to our cause. The only reason for sorrow is, that our revered master, Hahnemann, is not alive to witness this triumphant proof of his own great discoveries." For weeks, various experiments were made, tending, as it was believed, to show that the magnetoscope could demonstrate, infallibly and certainly, the effect upon the body of any infinitesimal dose, however small, as drugs in their 30th, 300th, or 3000th dilution. And the power of the instrument was lauded as the greatest possible discovery, and the greatest possible proof of the efficacy of infinitesimal doses, by homœopathists in Edinburgh, London, and elsewhere. But alas ! Dr Madden has now candidly owned, and others with him, that the instrument, after all, shows no such thing, and that the whole, like homœopathy itself, is a piece of self-deception on the part of those who touched or worked with the instrument. (For a full report, see *Lancet*, Nov. 15, 1851.) "Globulism is (says the writer), neither more nor less true than the wonders of this famous instrument. The same intellects, dealing with similar evidence, have supported both the one and the other."

¹ A late amateur homœopathic writer, on the other hand, denounces as in practice altogether untrustworthy, all physicians who, like Dr Madden, turn from allopathy to homœopathy. "It is (observes Mr Everest), if the truth must be told, a national calamity, and nothing else, when a doctor is converted. Armed with his diploma, he plunges in *medias res*, gives pilules, drops, aconite water ; mistakes aggravations of the natural disorder, and plays almost as many pranks with the little single medicines as he did with the compound ones."—*Sermon*, P. 75. Nay, he (a friend and disciple of Hahnemann) upbraids most modern homœopathic practitioners, as knowing little or nothing of the proper practice of homœopathy, and the principles of Hahnemann. "Modern Homœopathy (says he) rushes through all the sage's precautions, like a mad hull through a field of flowers. Now, the consequence of all these hideous mistakes, is quite *fatal* in cases of chronic disease"—P. 17. The true application of the doctrine of homœopathy, for example, "*excludes* (says he), the use of Aconite, in almost *every* case in which it is now employed," &c.—P. 12.

through the land, deluding, by its unaccountable infatuations, the powerful, the learned, the rich, and, worse than all, the poor, in multitudes: and not only are riches placed at the command of the instruments of these fallacies, but what are far more precious, and this is far more terrible to contemplate,—the lives of our fellow-creatures. In fact, there is at this moment throughout this country an awful system of trafficking or gambling with the issues of life and death, a perilous tampering with the elements of mortality; nay, a jeopardizing, not of the body only, but even of the soul. For who can say, where victims are hurried out of the world by a delusion, and for want of proper treatment, who can say that some of such might not have been saved alive, and given time for repentance as well as recovery? It is altogether an awful consideration; and I quite shudder when I look back, at the number of melancholy cases which have come to my knowledge, where, at the eleventh hour, the regular practitioner has been called in when it was too late; when the precious time, in which medicine might have availed, had been wasted with homœopathy; and we could only shake our heads, and lift up our hands, and exclaim, ‘Alas! what folly!’ and I fear we might add, ‘What knavery too!’”¹

¹ From “Report of the Speeches on Irregular Practice,” at the last Meeting of the Provincial Medical Association, p. 19.

